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Engraved by H W Smith

*Butler Winmarth*

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**MEMOIR**

**OF**

**BUTLER WILMARTH, M. D.;**

**One of the Victims of the late terrible Railroad  
Catastrophe at Norwalk Bridge, Ct.:**

**WITH**

**EXTRACTS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE  
AND MANUSCRIPTS.**

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**BY WM. H. FISH.**

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**BOSTON:  
CROSBY, NICHOLS AND COMPANY.**

**NEW YORK:  
FOWLERS AND WELLS.**

**1854.**

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## PREFACE.

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Here is an unpretending Memoir of an unpretending, but most excellent Man, Christian, and Physician. Dr. Wilmarth was not widely known, out of the sphere of his professional practice, but within that sphere, which was somewhat extended, he was greatly respected, honored, and loved ; and when the intelligence of his death at the fatal and memorable "NORWALK BRIDGE," was circulated among those who knew him, I doubt if any other victim of that terrible and melancholy tragedy was more sincerely and deeply lamented than he. Others were, indeed,whelmed in that destruction who were more eminent and better known to fame—some who stood deservedly high in public estimation, not only for their ability and acquirements, but for their virtues and their useful lives ; yet, probably no one of these was the object of more ardent affections or implicit confidence. How heavily the calamitous

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blow fell upon his surviving wife and children, words, of course, cannot describe ; but every one instinctively knows that it must have been almost overwhelming. Painful would it be to attempt to lift the veil which concealed their grief and desolation from the public view ; and I will not here undertake the task. Let the unaided reflection of the reader, added to such experience of similar suffering as he may have, supply the deficiency. And let it suffice for me to say of the numerous personal friends of the good Dr., outside of his family circle, and more especially of the members of The Hopedale Community, of which he was a beloved associate, that theirs was a no surface and transient grief, but that they are still sadly conscious that they have sustained a great and irreparable loss, by his departure from their midst. Now that he is gone, they feel that they are deprived of the presence of one whose place can hardly be filled by any other living man—especially as a Physician.

Having been thus highly esteemed by his friends, and from the necessities of the case, having also been hastily buried, without a convenient opportunity for the preparation of a suitable Discourse for his funeral, or for the summoning of those interested in

him thereto, it was suggested and advised that a Memoir of his life should be prepared, and that I should accomplish the work. It was thought that he was worthy of such a record; and that though dead, or rather departed, he would thus still speak to many for their good. And, without going through the formality of apologizing for my unfitness for the task, I will simply say, that in executing it, I have done the best I could under the circumstances. The materials with which I had to commence, were the most scanty possible—almost none, excepting what I had gathered from my own ten years' acquaintance with him, and such facts as I could get from time to time, and piece-meal, from his wife, who was residing twelve miles distant from me, and whom I could not often see. During a portion of his life, the Dr. kept a daily Journal, and wrote out many occurrences of his early years, which might have been of great service to me, could I have obtained them; but, unfortunately, his too great modesty induced him, a few years since, to consign the whole to the flames. He did not think his life marked and important enough to be published to the world.

I ought here to say, however, what my readers will observe, that I have been considerably indebted

to Mr. Phineas Field, and Dr. David Rice, both of Leverett, for much information concerning Dr. Wilmarth; and I would here gratefully acknowledge my obligations to them, as I also do to all others who have forwarded me letters, some of which I have found it convenient to publish.

Let me also say, that I have been so situated, during my writing of the work, that I have been unable to command many consecutive days to devote to it; and have often hastily written at fragments of time that could not be well spared from pressing mental and manual employments. Having labored under these disadvantages, the Memoir must, of necessity, be a very imperfectly prepared one, and I am quite conscious that it is so. Hence, it makes no pretension to literary merit of any kind, and is not, therefore, sent forth to critics, either for their praise or censure, as a composition, but principally to appreciating friends and acquaintances, as a memorial of one whom they loved. It is only a plain statement of a plain man, both unexpectant and unambitious of any other distinction than that which well-meant endeavors to add to the sum of human virtue and human happiness can justly claim. My aim has not been to paint, or to give a fancy sketch of an ideal

character, decorated with choice flowers of rhetoric ; but merely to present such a portrait of DR. WILMARTH, as his friends would recognize as strictly accurate, and cheerfully accept and cherish, for the original's sake. To what extent I have succeeded in doing this, I must leave those best acquainted with him to judge ; trusting that they will not think I have wholly failed in my endeavor. But such as the Volume is, it is offered to the friends of the departed, as a tribute of respect and affection, which I can but hope they will be able to receive as not altogether unworthy of him ; and to the general public as the record of an upright and useful life, a knowledge of which cannot fail to exert a strong influence in favor of truth and goodness. I will only add, that, aside from the interest which this Volume will have for the Dr.'s *personal* and *religious* friends—for whom it is specially prepared—it will be found, I think, to be of much value, particularly to the friends of Hygiene and Medical Reform, on account of the Letters and Lectures on these general subjects, which are herein published. To these, therefore, I would call particular attention ; confident that, coming from such a man—a man with so much medical knowledge, experience and skill, and such

rare *conscientiousness*—they are of great value and well worth seriously pondering.

### THE LIKENESS

Which embellishes this Memoir, is from a steel engraving by H. W. SMITH, of Boston, and will be recognized, I think, by the Dr.'s friends, in general, as a very accurate one. It is, at any rate, quite as accurate as the daguerreotype from which it was copied, and superior to what was expected, under the circumstances—Mr. Smith never having seen the original in his life time. It is, therefore, satisfactory to the Dr.'s friends, and reflects credit upon the artist.

And here I take pleasure in saying to those who are especially interested in the matter, that we are indebted for this valuable memento, to the generosity of the President and Directors of the New York and New Haven Railroad Company, who very cordially furnished me with the means to defray the expense of it. I use the word "*generosity*" in reference to their donation, because they had before done for the Dr.'s family what they considered *justice* demanded in the case, and what was satisfactory to all interested. They had paid over to them the

sum of \$5000, besides \$200 in addition, to defray the incidental expenses of getting it. I was, therefore, somewhat doubtful, in the premises, about asking for anything more ; but was so exceedingly anxious for an engraving, and not knowing how to procure one, conveniently, otherwise, I decided to make an appeal to the generosity of the Company, through its honored President, ROBERT SCHUYLER, Esq., of New York, saying to him that the cost of an engraving would be sixty dollars, and if the Company would authorize him to pay *fifty* dollars towards it, the bereaved friends of the deceased would feel themselves under obligations which they would ever gratefully remember. Few, if any, who knew of my making the request, thought it would be granted ; but I wrote in *faith*, and soon received the following gentlemanly and kind reply, which I gladly record to the honor of " Corporation," which is generally said to be "*soulless* :"

" OFFICE OF THE NEW YORK AND NEW HAVEN }  
Railroad Co., 2 Hanover Street. }

" *New York, October 15, 1853.*

" DEAR SIR :—

" I regret that it has not been in my power to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed favor of the 12th inst. at an earlier date ; but very pressing engagements have compel-

led me to postpone the pleasure of assuring you that your wishes shall be gladly complied with, to the full amount of the cost of the engraving, say sixty dollars.

"Our Directors are, most of them, at this moment, out of town, and I do not wish you to consider this letter any further in reply to yours, than may be necessary to enable you to rely upon the receipt of the money.

"I am, very respectfully yours,

"ROBERT SCHUYLER.

"Wm. H. Fish."

After the completion of the engraving, I forwarded an imprint from it to Mr. Schuyler, and received the following letter in answer :—

*"New York, December 15, 1853.*

"DEAR SIR :—

"I am in the receipt of your kind favor of the 13th inst., accompanying the engraving of your esteemed friend, Dr. Wilmarth. I shall submit your letter and the likeness of Dr. Wilmarth to our Directors at their next meeting, and feel that I need not assure you of their interest in the Memoir you have in hand, and their continued sympathy for the family and friends of the unfortunate sufferer.

"Enclosed, you will please find the amount we were glad to promise you.

"I am, very respectfully, yours,

"ROBERT SCHUYLER,

"Pres't N. Y. & N. H. R. R. Co.

"W. H. Fish."

*Hopedale, April 29, 1854.*

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# MEMOIR.

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## CHAPTER I.

His birth and adoption—His removal to Rowe and thence to Montague—His home influences and educational advantages—His feeble health and visit to Narragansett Bay—Recovers his health—Studies his profession and commences its practice—Marries—His practice becomes extensive—Moves to Leverett—His practice and standing there, and his arduous and conscientious labors.

BUTLER WILMARTH was born of humble and somewhat obscure parentage, in the town of Norton, Mass., December 18th, 1798; and at the age of two years he was adopted by Mr. Amos Wilmarth, of Attleboro', Mass., as his son, from whom he received his name. Amos Wilmarth was a respectable and worthy farmer, and in comfortable, or moderately prosperous, circumstances in life. About the year 1810 or '11, he, with his family, left Attleboro' and took up his residence in Rowe—one of the North Western towns of Massachusetts. Here, however, they resided only some three or four years, when they moved to Montague, a town about forty miles dis-

tant from Rowe. The lamented subject of this Memoir remained in this family until he was of age ; and he seems to have received very much the same treatment that an own son would have received—especially from his adoptive father.

But his situation in this home of his childhood and youth, was far from being favorable to the development and proper culture of his intellectual and spiritual nature, and he often, in after life, expressed much regret that some of the circumstances and influences by which he was then surrounded, were so unfortunate and deleterious. He was not, indeed, more than ordinarily exposed to the grosser vices ; but suffered for the want of an affectionate, judicious, and wise mothers's care, counsel and aid, as well as for the want of intelligent and elevated society, and enlightened and liberal methods of education. Still, he ever cherished feelings of affectionate gratitude for the parental kindness and care which provided for him in childhood, and helped him up to maturity ; and he never failed to manifest those feelings as long as Mr. and Mrs. Wilmarth lived, which was to extreme old age. His faithfulness to them never failed, as all who knew him well, know also that it could not fail—know that even as a simple

matter of conscience, or from a mere sense of duty, he could leave no moral or religious obligation unfulfilled. Whom he owed, he endeavored to pay ; and whether the debt were pecuniary or moral in its nature.

About the time that he became of age, he was very much out of health ; and, with only two dollars in his pocket, he went to the shore of Narragansett Bay, in Barrington, R. I., with the hope of improvement. His father Wilmarth, then considerably reduced in property, kindly carried him in his wagon a part of the way, leaving him to continue his journey alone, as best he could. How he reached the place of his destination, is not known ; but he reached it in great feebleness of health and somewhat depressed in spirits. He, however, found some kind friends amongst the strangers in whose midst he stopped, and they furnished him such employment, on their farms and in other occupations, as he could pursue with any advantage, and otherwise rendered him assistance, so that he was enabled to meet his expenses, and partially, at least, to secure the great object of which he was in pursuit. He, therefore, returned to the region of Montague, in the course of a few months, and looked about him for some life-

occupation. He had before, it is thought, had an eye to the medical profession, and desired to prepare himself to enter upon it. Indeed, he seems to have had an instinctive tendency in this direction even from early childhood. When quite young, he would often go into the fields for the purpose of collecting various kinds of medicinal plants, and was accustomed to feel the pulse of his school-fellows and playmates. In consequence of this peculiarity, they dubbed him with the title of "Doctor." But as he had not the means to educate himself for the calling thus indicated to him by nature, he must, therefore, wait till he could procure them. What should he do? Hard work at manual labor he had not the strength for; and he had enjoyed no other educational advantages than those afforded by the common schools around him, which were, at that time, and particularly in that region, quite inferior; so that he was hardly qualified for any mere mental employment. He had, indeed, used his poor opportunities and advantages for the accumulation of knowledge, wisely and well; and had thought and read, much beyond most young men of his class and circumstances. He, however, had only just begun the work of mental culture and acquisition, and learned

enough to know and to feel his own deficiencies—an important point, it is true, to be reached in educational progress, yet not one greatly encouraging to public effort in new and responsible positions of intellectual life. But he, nevertheless, ventured to make trial of that very common stepping-stone to the “Professions”—the situation of a country school teacher;—too common a stepping-stone, by the way, for the prosperity and success of the cause of Education. For he who only takes upon himself this important office, simply as a temporary expedient, and as a mere aid, pecuniary or otherwise, to the prosecution of studies preparatory to his prospective calling, will seldom do full justice to himself or his pupils. But Butler Wilmarth was not a man, even thus early in life, greatly to neglect the performance of either a promised or an implied duty; and I learn that, according to the ideal of the time and places in which he taught, he was a respected, faithful, and successful teacher. The most of his teaching was in Montague, though he taught one term or more in Fitzwilliam, N. H.

At about the age of 23 years, Mr. Wilmarth commenced the study of medicine with Wm. F. Sellen, M. D., of Amherst, Mass. Dr. Sellen, as I gather

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from reliable sources, was an able, well-educated, and skillful Physician ; and he had an extensive practice, and was deservedly popular in his profession. Whilst with him, Mr. Wilmarth paid his way, by working on the 'Dr.'s land, and at such other outdoor employments as could be furnished him. As, however, there was much of this manual labor to be done, about his Preeceptor's premises, he found that he had but little time to study, and was not making much progress in his preparations for his chosen profession. This he finally complained of to Dr. Sellen, whose reply was, that he must then learn to say "No," when called upon to work more than he thought duty required ; and henceforth confine himself to the Office, and with greater resoluteness and persistency. This advice he followed, and was ever after more just and generous to himself than he had been. He applied himself diligently to his readings and other preparations, and was able to make satisfactory improvement. Having remained with Dr. Sellen two years, he left him ; but soon re-commenced his studies under the instruction and guidance of Dr. — Brigham, then of Greenfield.

At this time he boarded at his father Wilmarth's, and walked two miles to his recitations. Dr. Brig-

ham, however, soon had an invitation, which he accepted, to take charge of an Asylum, or Hospital, in Hartford, Ct. ; and thus he gave up his new student, to look elsewhere for assistance to continue the educational course upon which he had entered. Being cut off, therefore, from this resource, and no other one easily accessible opening before him, Mr. Wilmarth threw himself upon his own acquisitions and self-reliance, and commenced the practice of medicine himself, on his own responsibility, and without Diploma or License.

This new and responsible position he entered into in Montague ; and as he was well known there, and esteemed as an able and excellent man, who would naturally succeed and rise in his profession ; and was likewise recommended and sustained by Dr. Sellen, who had great confidence and hope in him, he immediately secured patronage, and his practice gradually increased, till, in the course of a few years, it became extensive. Dr. Sellen frequently visited him, and called upon him to consult with him in difficult cases. That he had great confidence in the skill of his pupil, the new Dr., will be readily inferred from the fact that he employed him as his own physician for many years. He also ever cherished for Dr. Wil-

marth the most ardent friendship—almost the love of a brother—and this continued till his death, which took place somewhere about the year 1840. Several eminent physicians attended him in his last sickness, but Dr. Wilmarth was his principal and constant one. This fact seems to reflect much credit upon a man who prepared for, and entered upon the medical profession, under so many disadvantages as surrounded Dr. Wilmarth; and who had almost wholly to make himself and his reputation, as a Physician. It is for this reason that it is mentioned here.

Some three or four years after Dr. Wilmarth entered upon his profession—about the year 1830—he was called, as a Physician, to Mr. Joseph Osgood, a highly respectable and influential farmer of Wendell, a town adjoining Montague; and his visits were continued through several months. During this time, he became intimately acquainted with Phila, the daughter of Mr. Osgood, to whom he was somewhat more than ordinarily attracted, and whom he thought a congenial and fit companion for him. As she seems to have been in unity with him in this opinion—or, at least, not averse to his entertaining it for himself, and inclined to reciprocate his esteem and affections—the intimacy was persevered in,

and resulted in their marriage, in the year 1831.

Dr. Wilmarth's choice of a companion was a most wise and fortunate one, and he always deemed it so. Mrs. Wilmarth is now one of the most estimable of women ; and as a wife and a mother she has ever been among the most devoted, affectionate and faithful. Unassuming, modest, retiring, amiable and gentle, and uniformly under the guidance of the Christian spirit and Christian principles, she has filled her position in life, with unsurpassed grace and fidelity. She has been just such a wife as Dr. Wilmarth needed—needed for both sides of his nature and character ; the downward and the upward. Her excellent judgment and almost unlimited forbearance and patience, were perfectly adapted to restrain and subdue the one ; and her sympathy and interest in all that he loved and practiced that was good, strengthened and encouraged the other, and did much to hallow and to bless his earthly life. And he fully appreciated her in return ; deeming her a model wife and mother. Being thus, in her mature life, the elements, at least, of her superior qualities must have existed in her whilst young ; justifying the remark that Dr. Wilmarth's choice was a wise and fortunate one.

Soon after Dr. Wilmarth was married to Miss Osgood, they went to house-keeping in a small story and a half house, which he had built in an obscure part of Montague, (the extreme easterly part,) and where they found few enough neighbors, one would naturally think, to suit even a hermit. Here they dwelt for three or four years, in a very simple and economical manner, yet contentedly and happily, but hoping for more prosperous times and better surroundings in the future.

The Dr.'s practice had by this time begun to extend somewhat largely into several adjoining towns; and in Montague, Leverett, Amherst, Northfield and Wendell, particularly, he was popular, and his popularity was fast increasing. The reason of his leaving his original and humble settlement, was an invitation to make his residence in Leverett, where he would be more central to his patients, and where he was in much demand. This invitation was extended to him, probably in the year 1834, by Capt. Alpheus Field, (under the sanction of others,) who was one of the most wealthy, worthy and influential men in the town; and who remained a warm and faithful supporter and friend of the Dr. as long as he lived.

As an inducement for Dr. Wilmarth to move to Leverett, his friends there, through Capt. Field, offered to be at the expense of transporting him, of furnishing him a house to live in a year, gratis, and of moving him back again, just as freely, if he should not succeed, and should wish to return. This liberal and confiding offer he accepted, and was soon convinced that he had made a wise decision. He found himself pleasantly situated, and cordially welcomed to his new field of labor by the community in general. He at once had as much business as he could attend to, and he was often sent for to visit many of the towns lying in that general region—Pelham, Shutesbury, New Salem, Greenfield, Shelburne, Sunderland and Gill, being prominent ones among them. He became particularly distinguished for his skill in chronic diseases; and though he had not yet received his doctorate, caring little or nothing about the matter, most of the regular Physicians highly esteemed him, and “were always glad to meet him in consultation.” I have been informed of but one exception. Dr. Gridley, “the first surgeon of Hampshire Co., and a thoroughly educated man,” was both his professional and personal friend.

Had Dr. Wilmarth been more “a man of the

world"—more ambitious for a name, for the accumulation of property, for display, he might easily have stood high on the scroll of medical fame. To have secured this end, he was only deficient in intellectual culture, and the learning of the schools; and could he have sacrificed his desire to be immediately and widely *useful* to his fellow beings, these advantages were quite within his reach, and he would have readily secured them. He had a more than common thirst for knowledge—for *all* knowledge, especially, that could be made subservient to human welfare—and a marked aptness for acquiring it; as well as superior memory to retain it, after acquired; and the simple *ambition* would have accumulated it. Nor would it have taken him so long as it does most students to have become distinguished for his attainments. This fact is proved by what he actually made himself, with such meager opportunities as he enjoyed.

But he could not spare any time from the mere practical and urgent duties that crowded upon him. He cared no more for learning merely to display, than for costly clothing and equipage; always turned pedantry into ridicule, and valued original common sense far more highly than traditionary book lore;

and as he could not *conveniently* educate himself so thoroughly as he wished to be educated, he thought he should be more serviceable to the world by giving himself to it as he actually was, and might become, through observation, practice and experience, than by withdrawing from it and devoting himself exclusively to study.

It was not the love of money ; not the love of celebrity ; not the love of any mere earthly object, that attracted him to his profession and influenced him to choose it ; but it was a desire and a purpose to live to benefit and to bless mankind, and to minister to their necessities and happiness—as a good Physician might. He wished, therefore, to be up and doing whatever his hands found to do in this work, with earnestness and zeal. And in season and out of season, night and day, winter and summer, and in all kinds of weather, and under almost all circumstances, he was devotedly and hurriedly engaged in it. He might have placed too low an estimate upon art, science, philosophy, literature—literature particularly—and he probably sometimes did ; but it is a question whether he did not do more real service to mankind without them, than he would have done with them, had he been obliged to retire



to private life for their acquisition. He did a great deal of work in his profession, and seems to have done it well—judging that work by the old standard of “*Materia Medica*.” He probably did as much good as most of the first class Physicians, who graduated from College and School with high honors ;—*as little evil*, perhaps some will think it ought rather to be said. At any rate, it clearly appears that he compared favorably with other Physicians, and was not an unsuccessful competitor with them for practice. He rode enough during his thirty most healthy, vigorous and active years to have accumulated a handsome fortune ; and would have done so, had he been less of a Christian than he was, and only as selfish as ordinary men. Others of the profession, with far less labor, have lived in luxury and died rich.

But however it may be, as to the amount of usefulness which Dr. Wilmarth accomplished, compared with the more learned of his professional brethren, or as to the amount he could have accomplished himself, with a liberal education, compared with what he did accomplish, he certainly secured a “reputation” in his calling, that one might well be proud of, with the most manly and Christian pride. If the

"world" did not know him, because he was not of it ; by his devoted services to mankind, rendered in the spirit of humanity, he built himself up a monument in some hundreds of hearts, at least, which is of far more worth and far more durable, than any monument of stone ever reared by human hands to perpetuate the fame of man. His life in Leverett was a laborious and arduous one, and allowed him but little time for recreation, relaxation or rest ; and was all the while gradually undermining his constitution and bringing on premature infirmity, if not premature death ; but it was nevertheless a life which he could look back upon with much satisfaction and joy, confident in himself that it had not been spent in vain, but to the good of many, and therefore to the glory of the Father of Spirits. He had restored the diseased to health ; he had mitigated pain ; he had pointed out the way to a long life ; thus much for the body : and for the mind—he had enlightened its ignorance, he had consoled its grief, he had saved it from despondency, and strengthened, and encouraged and confirmed it, in its higher aspirations, purposes and endeavors. He had been a Physician to the body and the soul equally. It was a great reward to him that he had been ; and his heart en-

larged with emotions of thankfulness to the Source of all good, that he had been strengthened and enabled thus to expand and use the powers and energies of his nature.

Having spent many years of usefulness in Leverett, in the midst of a large number of the most affectionate and confiding friends and patients, whom he also greatly esteemed and valued, he cherished, even to the close of his life, not a few pleasant reminiscences of them of which I have often heard him speak with much satisfaction and pleasure. So reciprocal were the attachment and good will of the parties that he would probably have never left them but from a sense of duty to what seemed to him a higher call.

## CHAPTER II.

Some of his general qualities of head and heart—His personal appearance and plain dress—His intellectual ability—His humor and mirthfulness—His benevolence—His reform spirit—His compassion for evil doers—His honesty—His artlessness and frankness—His kindness to children—His indifference to what people might say of him.

IN the previous chapter I gave a hasty and very general review of Dr. Wilmarth, from his childhood to the time that he was an established and widely known and popular Physician, in the town of Lev-erett, Mass. It might have been gratifying, particularly to his large circle of personal friends, could I have given a more detailed account of his earlier years ; but the materials essential thereto were not accessible, and this must suffice as an apology for the deficiency. And it may, too, be reasonably doubted, whether the minute particulars of one's childhood and youth are of sufficient interest to be recorded, unless in some strikingly exceptional cases. Many Memoirs that we meet with seem overburdened

with such matters ; which can be of no special value excepting, perhaps, to a very few kindred or intimate friends. But, however this may be, in the estimation of my readers, as I could collect but little information respecting our departed friend's juvenile career, I have been able to impart but little.

My main purpose, therefore, in the present Memoir, is to represent Dr. Wilmarth as I have personally known him, and as I have known of him, through those who were his most intimate acquaintances and friends—as he was also known to the public, both as a Physician and as a Man—peculiarly Christian in both characters.

My first acquaintance with him, was as a “Restorationist”—a hearty sympathizer and zealous co-laborer with the small religious denomination that once bore that name, and of which I was also a member. This was about the year 1840, and I shall therefore hereafter speak of him, as he has lived and labored since that date. Before, however, going into the details of his character and works, it may be well here to give some ideas of him as to his general intellectual and moral qualities.

Dr. Wilmarth, then, as a MAN, was above ordinary—a man of large, acute, and strong mind. His

first appearance, to a stranger, did not, indeed, indicate this, save as his broad, high, and noble forehead attracted attention, as it naturally did. But all who observed that, knew that he must be a man of mark. Well do I recollect this sign of the man *within*, as about the only peculiarity of his person that impressed me, the first time I saw him, sufficiently to remain in my memory, after our separation, which lasted for two or three years. His outside appearance, which the tailor had fashioned, did not commend him to the attention, profound respect and high regard of *exquisites*, or of gentlemen and ladies with whom the latest styles of dress are among the great interests of life ; and some such probably thought but little of him, because he was so ordinarily attired. Sometimes they neglected him, when they would have honored him, outwardly, at least, had he been a richly clad and stiffly starched rum-seller, slaveholder, or devourer of widows' houses. So much influence has the apparel in which one appears in public. If one has not any thing else to commend him, costly and fashionable dress often will ; and he who has not this, but *only* mind and heart, as his chief recommendation, must be content to wait for respect till he himself becomes as well known as his coat. Position, however, often

does something for a man, as well as cloth, and when it sometimes became known, in certain circles, that the stranger was "Dr." Wilmarth, he, of course, received his share of notice and consideration.—How much greater is a garment and an office than a man—how evident is it, too, that he was made for them and not they for him!—judging, that is, from numerous manifestations in fashionable society.

But Dr. Wilmarth was not, after all, I ought to say, strikingly peculiar in his dress—far from one of your slovenly literary men, whose chief pride seems to be to appear as much out of fashion (and out at the elbows) as possible, *thereby* to attract attention to their genius and merits. His garments were only not always made to harmonize with the prevailing fashion, and might be a little coarse and a little "countryfied," never in tatters—he had too good and particular a wife for that—and never dirty. And this matter I mention, because it will frequently be seen, in the course of this Memoir, to illustrate one of the great Christian excellences of his character. He was conscientious, and conscientiously economical, in it, for Christ's sake and the world's. And being so plain a man, and altogether unostentatious, was one of the reasons that rendered it necessary for

strangers to become thoroughly acquainted with him, in order fully to understand and appreciate him. He was as unconcerned about his manners, as about his dress. There was no pretense to him, no palaver, no artifice. He was simply natural, and wished to stand only in natural relations with his fellow men. These qualities, however, are proofs of his moral, rather than intellectual, elevation, and will be more appropriately dwelt upon at length, in another place. But they indicate also, to some extent, largeness of mind—as mere pride of dress, of show, of position, come from littleness of mind.

That Dr. Wilmarth was mentally more than an ordinary man, is evinced by the simple fact of his gradually rising from the humble position in life which he occupied in his youth, to the really elevated one to which he attained before his death. The Schools, inferior or superior, did little for him, and his surrounding circumstances were by no means of a character to quicken him into mental activity, or to inspire him with a thirst for knowledge, or an ambition for public distinction and usefulness. Almost all the outfit that he had to start with, in the pursuit of the qualifications for a professional vocation, were

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his own internal forces, and the aids to which he had helped himself.

Men who thus begin their progressive development and acquisitions, and at last secure, among intelligent judges who know them best, a substantial reputation in their calling, must have something superior in them. They could not rise against so many hindrances if they had not. Some, if not all, their mental powers must be large and strong. And no intelligent person could be with Dr. Wilmarth long, without seeing and feeling that he possessed this superiority—especially if any of his favorite topics came up for conversation. He did not exhibit the evidences of large culture and extensive learning, for he had not been favored with these; and he never laid claim to one whit more than he possessed. He had no ambition to *seem*—as little as any man whom I ever knew—only an ambition *to be*; content with whatever he was, without any apparent anxiety to be thought more. In his earlier years, as has already been said, he enjoyed few advantages of education, and acquired only the elements of it; and after he entered upon manhood, he was so much engrossed with practical matters and duties, that he found but a small remnant of leisure to devote to

studies—to any other studies than those connected with his profession. He had too much heart—too much interest in human suffering and needs—to be as much head as it is desirable to be, when circumstances admit of it. He loved learning, particularly the sciences which aid in the understanding and practice of the medical profession; and there was such an absence of display to him; he was so averse to anything of the kind, that few knew the extent of his acquaintance with those sciences. In conversation, and in public lectures, he would sometimes open to a vein of knowledge, that his most intimate friends did not know existed in so rich a mine within him. And he had an intellect, sharp and quick to discern, easy to comprehend, and apt to appropriate, whatever subject, old or new, was presented to him. He was also one of the most observing of men; always remarking upon whatever of novelty or interest presented itself before him.

His critical powers were likewise prominent and active. “He was, as I have often told him,” says his excellent widow, in a letter to me, “born to be a critic; for it seemed to him as natural as his breath to be criticising some one’s views or conduct—but all with good intention.” And he was a close,

persistent questioner of public speakers, where the practice of questioning them was allowed—particularly if anything new was brought forward. At our Chapel in Hopedale, public meetings of all kinds are always free; and in the course of each year we have had, from the commencement of our Community, not only some new, but some strange, occasionally some startling, views presented to us—sometimes by members of the Community, sometimes by persons from abroad. Now and then we have been visited by some very eccentric persons; and they, enjoying the largest liberty, have not unfrequently opened to us a budget of curious matters—wise and witty, good and true, or otherwise, as the case might be. We have had addresses delivered to us, inculcating almost all the varieties of thought and opinion, from Robert Owen, the Pantheist, (not so now, I believe,) to some of the latest Mediums for “Spirits.” And whenever our Br. Wilmarth was present on such occasions, he almost always added to the interest of the meetings, by his close questionings and various apt remarks—sometimes serious and sage, frequently humorous and witty, ever honest and conscientious. He often aided us in eliciting light and truth from the conflicting elements; and whenever he himself

lectured before us, as he occasionally did, we were instructed, gratified and profited. Greatly do we all miss his valued presence from such scenes, and our hearts are possessed with grief and sorrow, when we reflect that we shall see him in them no more ! But we *shall* see him again, amidst higher scenes and purer joys. This is the great hope, we mutually cherished when he was in the flesh ; and it will not fail. The simple existence of an infinite and perfect God is the pledge of it ; though He is also the perpetual Inspirer of the hope.

Dr. Wilmarth was also a man of great humor—great *good* humor. A fund of mirthfulness he had, that appeared inexhaustible. As I now stand writing at my desk, some few rods from his former pleasant, happy home, I seem almost to hear his merry, joyous laugh, elicited, perhaps, by one of his own—more than likely, *ludicrous*—anecdotes, for which his mind must have had, I think, a separate department, and that department full. I fancy—and the fancy is only a fact of memory—I fancy he is enjoying some such a scene of hilarity as the above, with two or three friends in his yard ; and that I now see them separate ; he going into his door in a satisfied, delighted mood and air, to light up all within by his

sportive recital of the interview ; and they going to their homes talking and laughing at the good Dr.'s merriment and extasy ! Perhaps, also, they good humoredly contrast his *mirth* with his *piety*—a piety sincere, honest, without show or deceit, but yet of rather a Puritanic type—not severe, or gloomy, but serious and devout—the recognition and the love of God, flowing out in love to man, its basis.

That so religious a man should also be often so jocund, seemed an inconsistency to some ; but he never joked at the expense of true religion or humanity, or to their detriment. He had too large, too nice and quick a conscience, to do that. His mirth might sometimes have run to excess—it probably did ; and his piety, being somewhat grave and exact, he might sometimes have been really inconsistent. But no one ever thought him to be in the least degree tinged with hypocrisy. He was perfectly transparent. I do not believe he ever made a serious effort to pass himself off for more than he was, in any of his positions in life. He cared nothing for an artificial “reputation”—only endeavored to be *himself*, subordinate and conformed to the will of God—all unconsciously and unconcernedly leaving reputation to take care of itself, and come to

him or not, as society might adjudge. *His life* was not the breath of popular favor and applause. Of course he valued, and valued highly, the good will and approval of his fellow men—he felt himself too closely identified with mankind as the children of a common Father, as a common Brotherhood, not to do so. And he never affected to despise or defy public opinion—had not the least tendency to outrage it, and was exceedingly conciliatory. His rather ascetic piety was not, therefore, assumed for effect, however inconsistent some might think it, with his strong tendencies to mirthfulness, and however much disposed they might be, occasionally, to contrast the two phases of his character. His piety I have often thought a little traditional—never, however, otherwise than entirely honest. But his religious character will be the subject of a future Chapter. The present allusion to it is only incidental.

“His mirthfulness,” says his wife in the letter before quoted from, “was apparent to every one. Many things naturally presented themselves to him in a ludicrous light;” and all who knew him, I would add, also know how instinctively he seized upon those things, and used them to give an agreeable and pleasant spice to social intercourse. He

was seldom in familiar circles, on any ordinary occasions, for even a half hour, without getting all present into a cheerful and laughing mood. He was no sage Philosopher, sitting with finger upon closed lips, "a long and silent lustrum," thinking it undignified more than to smile; and yet his laugh, though often loud, was never rude and repulsive, but always genial and welcome. His intercourse with almost all classes of men had been extensive, and he always had some fact, old or new, humorously to illustrate some passing topic of conversation.

Within a few months he has staid many nights at my home, and we have, therefore, spent long evenings in this cheerful and joyous manner. Some of his anecdotes were drawn from religious life—most likely ministerial—some from medical life—illustrative, perhaps, of some shallow quack, "irregular" or "regular"—and many from "life among the lowly," in which sphere he had practiced his profession much, and been gratefully, sometimes amusingly, appreciated. Would memory serve me to do so, it would add to the interest of this work to repeat some of these; but they have passed from me, so that I cannot relate them, without spoiling them of some of their pith and interest; and thus they must

remain unrecorded. But the recollection of the subjects of some of these anecdotes, and of the persons and circumstances connected therewith, as well as of the Dr.'s animated and happy air and manner of relating them, will long remain with not a few of his personal friends, causing them many sensations of painful pleasure, as they think of those pleasant, delightful interviews, now forever gone !

But here is one of the many anecdotes he was fond of telling, communicated to me by his wife : She says of him : " It was natural for him to sympathize with his patients in distress, and he was quick to perceive when their health was affected by *pecuniary circumstances*. At such times, I have often heard him relate an anecdote of an experienced physician, who was called to consult with a young practitioner. The younger physician asked the older, what he thought the disease of the patient to be ? The latter looked up very dignifiedly and gravely, and answered : ' I think, Sir, it is a collapse of the pecuniarium.' At this the younger physician looked rather inquiringly and surprised, not understanding this new term. But he soon ascertained the meaning—a moment's reflection upon the term itself brought it to him. And my husband used frequently



to find such cases. Once, since we came to —, when I asked him what was the matter with a particular patient, he humorously replied : ‘ O, it is a *Collapse of the Pecuniarium.*’ Not that he supposed the patient to be free from any other disease ; but that if he could have a few hundred dollars given him it would give such a favorable impulse to his system, that his other difficulties would soon be removed.” And no one who knew the Dr. well, could doubt that had it been possible for him to do so, most gladly would he have always carried with him the appropriate medicine for this disease, and administered it, where actually needed, without extra charge. And he would have administered it, I am sure, in no Homœopathic doses ; excepting where this very peculiar “collapse” was only *imaginary* on the part of the complainer. He would have delighted to pour out money to the destitute, as water —hydropathically.

But here follow some of his letters, which will illustrate the character of his humor :—

TO DR. HERO.

N. L. W. C., August 12, 1852.

DEAR DOCTOR:—I have looked in vain for a report from you of the “battle.” If you have been

killed, say so ; if not, say so ; that I may know whether to rejoice or mourn. I don't want to do either for nothing ; so I hope you will speak, if you are not speechless. I have nothing new in particular ; have seventeen patients—no great scratch for this time of the year. They come and go like soap. I have had in all thirty. But the great house [fashionable hotel] across the way is *full*—full of stuffing, and drinking, and smoking, &c., &c.,—making “cases” for somebody ; mostly for the Allopathic brethren, I suppose. At least, they will have the handling of them first, then the Homœopathic, then the Botanic, then the Clairvoyants, then the “Spirits,” then the Hydro-Electro Morto-pathic, and finally, Post-morto-pathy will have some of them. Please write immediately, if you have not already written. Perhaps, however, I have a letter on the road, coming as fast as John Gilpin's “hat and wig.”

As ever, yours,

B. WILMARTH.

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TO DR. HERO.

*Lebanon Springs, N. Y., June 3, 1852.*

DEAR DOCTOR: In four or five hours after mailing my letter, giving my reasons for not writing sooner, laying out a plan, &c. [for the new W. C. Estab-

lishment at Westboro',] I received your *second*, which indicates a high grade of excitement. I call it "Denny Fever."\* I hope it will not prove fatal to your reasoning and calculating powers. I would recommend equalizing the circulation by wet-sheet packing, with cold applications to the head and a jug of hot water to the feet, followed by a half bath, plunge, pail douche, and shower, as often as the paroxysm occurs, till there is less determination to the head. Should this fail, take a sitz bath of 32 deg. for six hours, and repeat as occasion requires.

Yours, as ever,

B. WILMARTH.

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\*More scientifically, Febris Westonville, characterized by an ardent desire to trade with Denny, and live in Westonville. Ha, ha!

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TO DAVID CAMBELL.

*New Græfenberg, N. Y., March 31, 1852.*

BR. CAMBELL:—Yours of the 29th came safe, together with the Paper, announcing the opening of the N. L. W. C. Establishment, &c. I don't like the position our Advertisement occupies in it, —scattered along over a part of three columns, and split to pieces, not even affording room for my name, all together, on one line. But never mind. They have atoned for all that, by giving us credit for "*faculties*" for every kind of bath; and

again, for curing every "*phrase*" of disease. Now if we only have the right "*faculty*" and *phrase-ology*, we can get along with all the rest well enough. These are the main qualities in this age of humbuggery. But really, I did not mean to include the *diction* of patients among the list of diseases, suitable for *water treatment*, though I confess there is pressing need of a remedy in some cases; and if we can only demonstrate our "*faculties*" sufficiently to ensure the confidence of those who are diseased in their "*phrases*," we may do something towards correcting false *mental* impressions, as well as curing physical ailments.

I shall send a correction to the printers; for I cannot bear to see such blunderation in a plain matter. If Providence permit, I shall call and see you as I go East.

Yours, as ever,

B. WILMARTH.

But BENEVOLENCE was also a distinguishing virtue of his life. He was *naturally* benevolent; and he was likewise benevolent *from a sense of Christian obligation*. Jesus, *going about doing good*, was as much his admiration and guide, as Jesus the Teacher; and he was a worthy imitator of that meek and lowly—that truly lofty, One. In a large measure, did he possess the "Good Samaritan" Spirit; and

he manifested it often to the injury of his own pecuniary interests and prospects. Had he not been so largely benevolent, he could have easily laid up "earthly treasures" to the extent of his needs, and not been straitened in his circumstances, (as he was,) in the decline of his life. Dr. Rice says: "He was benevolent to a fault—if benevolence can be carried to that extent. I have often known him to bestow money for a benevolent object, even when he needed it himself. His sympathies were easily enlisted, especially where there was an object of suffering, under any circumstances; whether by poverty, disgrace, crime, or the strong arm of the law. His heart was open to their cry, and his purse to their rescue and relief, where justice did not order otherwise."

Mr. Field says of Dr. W.'s benevolence: "As to his benevolence, it was extensive. It extended to all with whom he had intercourse; whether rich or poor, high or low, bond or free. When he lived in Leverett, he was accustomed to set poor people to work, and pay them high wages, to his own detriment. On a particular occasion, I remember that one of his rich neighbors reprimanded him for paying so high wages, on the ground that it was a damage

to him—to the rich man! *He* could not hire so cheap, if wages were thus raised.” Mr. Field likewise adds: “Dr. Wilmarth was very hospitable to strangers. I have known him to entertain for weeks, and without pay, a colored man who was traveling for the purpose of sharpening razors. I have also known him to release an inebriate from jail, become responsible for his good behavior and temperate habits, and take him to his own house, and nurse and otherwise provide for him for some months. At one time, I knew him to fit up a shelter for a poor family, close to his own house, where they remained, I should think, two or three years. This must have been a considerable expense to the Dr. Then, again, his benevolent feelings kept him from calling upon poor people for debts due him by them, for his professional services. It was these benevolent acts, together with his low price for doctoring, that kept the man poor, as to this world’s goods.”

The testimony of the Dr.’s wife is: “In my husband, the poor and friendless found a true friend. Many times have I heard them lavish upon him their blessings; and to see them made happy was to him a rich reward. The wayfaring always found with him a welcome lodging.” His kindness to the colored

man, of whom Mr. Field has spoken above, Mrs. Wilmarth says, "was such that the poor creature thought he had found a home for life." And she once told me, that when she thought the time had arrived, at which he ought to leave them, in consequence of the burden of taking care of him being too much for her to bear, the Dr. really had *conscientious* scruples against requesting him to seek another home. He knew it was bringing an excess of work upon his wife, and that she ought to be relieved from it; but he thought the poor man might possibly have been sent to him, in the Providence of God—so much of a supernaturalist was he—as a test of his philanthropy, his religion, his professed faith in the Gospel of Christ! He hardly dared to take the responsibility of sending him away, but left his wife free to do the unpleasant act, if she felt clear in her mind about the rightfulness of it. He could not, he said, and must wait for more light.

"At another time," continues Mrs. Wilmarth, "as he was returning home from a professional visit, he overtook a boy whom he invited to ride with him. In conversation with him—and he was always familiarly inquisitive—he found he had run away, and was a bad boy. He, however, took him home

with him, and endeavored to do him good, reform and save him. The boy remained as long as he pleased, and then went away."

His benevolence was large and true enough to make him a REFORMER. He pitied all the unfortunate, and deeply sympathized with them ; and it was a perpetual, restless desire with him to see all prosperous, all happy. His wife says : " He was one who seldom wept at his own misfortunes ; but he could never read an account of human suffering—such as the burning of the Lexington,—(of which he had often spoken, dreading such an end,)—or a story of oppression and outrage—such as are common at the South—without weeping freely." Of course, then, he was an Abolitionist—as a *man* he was naturally an abolitionist ; as a Christian, and with his views of what constitutes a Christian, he could not possibly be otherwise. His wife informs me that he became converted to Anti-Slavery by reading a small work entitled " The Mirror of Misery"—something like twenty-five or thirty years ago. And his abolitionism was of a genuine, heart type. He most fully recognized the negro, the slave, as a man and a brother ; and treated him as such, whenever he met him in any sphere of life. For him he

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had as low a bow, as friendly a smile, as kind a word, as for the white man. He was certainly "no respecter of persons" to an uncommon extent. I remember, in particular, one fugitive slave who came to Hopedale to find a resting place, and a retreat from the kidnapper, whom he treated with very great kindness. The poor man came, and whilst here, was infirm, sick, and unable to do anything; and the Dr. had him at his house, and carried him through a most thorough course of water-cure treatment, and bestowed upon him as much attention and care as though he had been a wealthy patient, and was paying him large fees for his services. But this was only one of many similar cases. He had a large measure of that spirit which teaches that if one member suffer—and even the most insignificant—all the members should suffer with it, and labor for its redemption. He was likewise the "friend of sinners"—not of sin, of course, but of sinners—and of unfashionable, vulgar, generally condemned sinners. He might often have seemed very severe and harsh in his rebukes of them, whilst they were going on in their evil ways unrepentant and unblushingly; but no sooner did he see them in his presence, without sympathy, without pity and aid from those around

them—especially if they were neglected or treated with austerity—than he softened, and was full of a heavenly compassion towards them, which he was always ready to manifest in word and in deed. He stood ever on the side of the weak and the defenseless, and against the powerful who would crush them, or cut them off from mercy. “Misfortune,” says Dr. Rice, “drew from his great heart the bitter sigh, and from his eyes the flowing tears; and from his tongue, oppression was sure to receive merited rebuke.” “None,” says his wife, “were so wicked, but that he had a desire to do them good. I have often heard him say, that ‘if the D—l were sick and should send for me, I would go and see him’—a remark that some may regard as almost profane, but expressive of the feelings of his heart.” But of his benevolence as a Physician, I shall speak more particularly in another place.

And all who knew him knew that he was an *honest* man—strikingly, preëminently so—honest in the formation and expression of his opinions, and honest in all his actions; and as *truthful* as honest. I do not suppose any one doubted this, who was intimately acquainted with him. Dr. Holland of the New Græfenberg Water-Cure Establishment, N. Y., with

whom Dr. Wilmarth spent a year, as one of the Physicians to that Establishment, says, on this point, in a late letter to Rev. C. B. Campblell: "Dr. Wilmarth was certainly one of the most honest men I ever knew; in fact, I never knew his equal in that respect."—When he had made up his mind on any subject, every one knew where to find him, both in public and in private; and whether he stood alone or with a crowd; and they knew, too, that he would always be on the side of uprightness and rectitude. Some of his Letters, which will be hereafter inserted, will illustrate this peculiar quality of his character.

And then, he was so condescending to children—so thoughtful of their needs and their pleasure and happiness, that I must not pass over even this peculiarity. Mrs. Wilmarth says: "His feelings were youthful and buoyant; therefore many young people sought his company and enjoyed it, and he in return enjoyed theirs." And the truth of this latter remark is confirmed to me by many facts of his every day life. How many times have I seen him—the kind man—take several small children into his carriage, at our Dale, as he was going to and coming from his professional visits, and thus give joy to their little hearts by a ride! I have seen his sulky filled,

his wagon sometimes covered, with them, and he as pleased as they ! Many of their tender hearts will be dissolved into tears as the relation of this fact refreshes their memories. The carelessness, the recklessness of irresponsible men, has taken from *them* a precious friend ! His regard for them, his condescension and his benevolence, were ever manifesting themselves to them by ministering to their happiness. Seldom did he go into company where they were—especially if he was not seeing them often—without most familiarly, blandly and affectionately extending to them, as to the adults present, the cordial hand of friendship. And “though dead”—or risen—he is still speaking to them by his kindly gifts. A dozen copies of a juvenile paper, still monthly come to our office, and are circulated by my own little boy among those children to whom the good Dr. considerably and generously ordered them to be sent, a few months before his departure from earth.

But I will close this chapter of the Dr.’s peculiarities, by saying that he was, withal, one of the most indifferent of men as to what people might say of his peculiarities—some of them really humorous from their novel artlessness and perfect candor. He was

as ready to confess any fault and to correct any mistake he might make, in public, as he was in the most private circle of friends. He never deemed it a disgrace to do so ; and he would do it in the most unconfused and cool manner possible, laugh who might. One striking illustration of that trait his wife mentions. She says : " Many years ago, when we lived in Leverett, he was chosen Justice of the Peace ; and not long after was called upon to marry a couple. The guests were assembled and he proceeded to repeat the marriage ceremony ; but he had repeated but a few words before he found he had forgotten the formula he was intending to use. He acknowledged his embarrassment, commenced again, and went through without difficulty." And all who were ever in the practice of attending conference meetings with him, and other meetings where informal and promiscuous singing was interspersed, will be able to call to remembrance many occasions on which, in attempting to take the lead, he would commence on too high or too low a key, and just as calmly and quietly as if alone, request those who had joined him to stop and " try it again." Sometimes he would re-commence, perhaps two or three times ; wholly unconscious that any would be morti-

fied by a mere mistake ; and wholly unconcerned as to his own position in the matter. A friend, in reference to this same point, remarks : “ Whenever he got into a bad ‘fix,’ he would own up, as the saying is, and make the best of his way out of it.”

This peculiarity of character grew partly out of his great self-possession, and partly out of his fraternal feeling toward those with whom he was assembled, and which, he took it for granted, was reciprocated. He felt that they were all members of one great family, and should not be afraid or ashamed before each other in anything not essentially wrong. In this way he often avoided *extended* confusion, and so turned the mistake, that it had no other effect than to infuse a little humor and pleasantry into the circle convened. It would be well if those public speakers, and choirs of singers, who occasionally blunder to their great consternation, would learn a lesson from his example. It was indeed a little amusing, or *not* a little, to see and hear the good Dr., when he made a public “ blunder ;” and perhaps a little mortifying to some over-sensitive minds ; but it was, after all, a far better way of getting out of a difficulty than a dignified, learned and artificial way sometimes is.

## CHAPTER III.

Religious influence of his early life—Becomes personally religious—his interest in the Baptists and rejection by them—His theology—Connects himself with the Methodists, but is finally cut off from them—A controversialist, but charitable and liberal—is generally recognized as a Christian where he resides, on account of the excellency of his spirit and character—decline of his faith in the churches.

AMOS WILMARTH was a Universalist in Religion; consequently his adopted son, our departed friend and brother, was brought up under Universalist influences. It does not appear, however, that he was specially interested in that system of Theology, or in any other, very early in life. But—to quote again from his wife's letter—"At about the age of 20 years, his mind was more particularly called to the subject of Religion, than it ever had been before; at which time he thought he embraced the truths of Christianity. Not long afterwards, he offered himself as a candidate for admission to the Baptist Church, of N. Leverett, Mass." But he did not

harmonize with the "orthodox" Theology, in all its cardinal points ; and he was not a man to conceal or to compromise any truth which he believed, whatever the consequences might be for making his faith known. He did not, and could not, believe in eternal punishment, but confidently hoped for Universal Restoration, as the ultimate result of God's purpose and Christ's mission. This he plainly made known to his Baptist brethren, and expressed his determination to abide by it as Christian truth, until he could be fairly convinced, from the Scriptures, which were his Standard, that he was in error. Hence, though his "religious experience" was satisfactory to the Church, and all its members regarded him as a Christian, and were satisfied that his faith was "evangelical" in most other points ; as he believed that Good would at last overcome Evil, and God be "all in all," they declined receiving him into their full fellowship and communion ! He nevertheless continued in unity with them, and they with him, in their worship, until he moved to another place.

How brother Wilmarth came by his, then, very "heretical" views respecting the final destiny of mankind—the prospect of universal love, harmony and happiness—whether they were chiefly the result of



his own experience, reasonings, and study of the Bible, or whether he received them from some foreign source, does not clearly appear, from any evidence in my possession. It is probable, however, that he was helped to them by ELHANAN WINCHESTER, whom he always profoundly respected and revered, as a great and good man, and with whose Dialogues on "Universal Restoration," he became early familiar. As far back as my knowledge extends, he was opposed to the system of Ultra-Universalism—as the no-future punishment scheme, is sometimes called—and thought it unchristian in several of its features, and in the influence it exerted on many who followed it.

It should be here stated, however, that the Universalism of his early days, was quite different, in several important respects, from the Universalism of the present time—it then being a sort of "Calvinism gone to seed"—or Fatalism. But it was also often almost as much opposed to what was considered by our departed brother, "experimental and practical religion," as it was to endless misery. To a great extent, it was negative, or anti-orthodox in its character. It now encourages an emotional *piety*, and many means thereto, as well as some movements

for the "conversion of the world"—such as Sunday schools, conference meetings, and missionary societies—which it formerly placed a very low estimate upon. This anti-spiritual and anti-practical phase of the system, was, by the way, one of the great causes which led to the secession of the Restorationists in 1831, in which Br. Adin Ballou took such a leading and conspicuous part. That Restorationist "schism," was not merely a *theological* movement; for if the Universalist Denomination had then occupied its present position in reference to piety, and practical religion in individual life, the separation would not, it is probable, so soon, at least, have taken place. But to hear *all* future punishment sneered at and derided, both by Pulpit and Press, as a relick of heathenism, and internal religion frequently treated with skeptical lightness, was what the Restorationists of the Winchester type could not abide, and they therefore withdrew from the Denominatoin; partly from a theological and partly from a religious cause.

With this new movement, in behalf of a theoretical and *practical* Restorationism, brother Wilmarth most heartily and fully sympathized, aiding it to the extent of his means. He was particularly drawn

towards Br. Ballou, and was one of the first subscribers to the "Independent Messenger," of which Br. B. was the able, earnest; fearless Editor—having a hard theological and religious battle to fight in its columns, to engage in which then required no ordinary courage. About this time—in the year 1835—Dr. Wilmarth wrote to Br. B. as follows :

"I verily believe the views entertained by Restorationists, the best calculated to promote 'Glory to God, and peace on earth, and good will among men.' Yet I fear many wrest these truths to their own destruction. I am pleased when I see the dangerous points (if I may so speak) guarded; and I hope the 'Messenger' will continue to 'divide the word and give to each his portion in due season.' I have many serious debates with my Christian friends; and almost all the ministers within my acquaintance have endeavored to convince me of what they esteem my errors. And if, indeed, it be error, I pray the Lord to let me see and renounce it. But as yet, methinks it cannot be, that the greatest possible good of the universe can be brought about by the greatest possible misery of the greatest part of the members of that universe. This is a mode of reasoning utterly unintelligible to my weak capacity. I would as soon believe that day is night, summer is winter, or that life is death; and yet I often hear it asserted

by men of knowledge and piety, who would in a moment discard such reasoning if applied to anything but religion."

But Br. Wilmarth being at such a distance from the "scene of action," and having none of like faith to sympathize with, near him, he still continued in the partial, outside communion and fellowship of the more rigid sects. Heart religion, the religion of conscience and the affections, was, with him, before all creeds, however liberal and true even. Whenever he found *piety*, therefore, in which he saw no sham, but sincerity, honesty, earnestness, there he felt that he had a religious home. He did not, indeed, then, as nearer the close of life, discriminate between the piety of mere feeling and words and the piety of deeds, as well; and so he probably often placed too high an estimate upon the former. And yet he always had an elevated standard of individual duty, and was quick to detect seeming and hypocrisy, which he loathed. He only formerly failed to test the prevailing piety, by the standard of universal Right and Humanity—recognizing, therefore, all respectably *pious* men as Christians, even though their actions might be on the side of social and governmental wrong and oppression. Still, he was anti-

slavery in his heart and life, even then—if not consistently so in his associations.

Cherishing the foregoing view of internal religion, he naturally thought the “Church,” and its instrumentalities for converting the world, important, and having left the vicinity of the Baptists, he joined himself to the Methodists. On account of his Theology, they likewise hesitated about receiving him into full fellowship—probably from fear of the Rulers—but accepted him as a probationer, or member of the “Class.” “In this position,” says his wife, “he stood, I think, several years. At length a Preacher, more thorough in discipline, came into the charge of that circuit, who endeavored, as he expressed it, to ‘straighten things out.’ In the process of straightening, my husband was cut off, but soon had the offer made him to return; but, considering the matter of a connexion with any Sect less important than he had formerly done, he declined.”

His wife also says: “In these days, he was fond of argument, and was often much in controversy with Clergymen and others.” And I have frequently heard him relate his theological rencounters, and express the satisfaction they generally gave him—the principal question of debate being Universal

**Restoration vs. Eternal Punishment.** As is usually the case with the pioneers in a new movement, who are constantly driven to defend themselves against many attacks, he was well armed for battle, and thoroughly furnished with all the necessary means for carrying on such a war of mind. He was specially well versed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, in the inspiration of which he firmly believed, and which he made his constant study. And he was ingenious also in his arguments—quick to see an opponent's point and to turn it to his own advantage, and quick in the application of his own points, at the right moment—witty withal. I can easily believe, therefore, knowing thus much of this peculiarity of his mind, that, though he stood almost alone in his neighborhood, as to his Theology, he must have been generally recognized as standing there, a strong man well armed; and an efficient defender of his faith, against whatever attacks might be made upon it, whether from pew or pulpit. And that such was his position, I have also learned to be the fact from reliable sources.

But there was no narrowness, no bitterness, in Dr. Wilmarth's controversies. He recognized the right of others to differ from him—as clearly as he recog-

nized his own right to differ from them. He was *naturally* thus inclined; and his peculiar religious faith, it being an influential and practical faith with him, taught him to be tolerant, liberal, charitable, toward all. It must, however, in justice, be confessed, that he was rather more inclined to be lenient toward *old* religious errors than toward *new* ones. He shrunk from "Rationalism" more than from "Orthodoxy," thinking the latter had more *Gospel* in it—on the devotional and experimental side of it, at least—and that this Gospel element sanctified it, to a great extent. Though he was unyieldingly intent—as an orthodox clergyman\* writes to me—"upon eschewing vagaries, however solemn, and upon being governed only by the dictates of common sense;" he was, nevertheless, very much of a Supernaturalist, in religious matters, and distrusted all systems not based upon the Bible, as a miraculous revelation. And I think he was somewhat tinctured with *prejudice* against some forms of liberalism in religion; for he was not, of course, a perfect man—as who is? But it was "vital piety" and "practical Christianity," that he desired to possess himself, and

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\*Rev. C. B. Campbell—one of his patients at New Græfenberg and at Westboro'.

to see others possessing ; and wherever he saw these, he freely and fully fellowshipped them, whatever might be the creed that they stood connected with. It was emphatically true of him, that :

“To sect or party his large soul  
Disdained to be confined ;  
The good he loved, of every name,  
And prayed for all mankind.”

His wife says : “ We have lived in several different places, and his acquaintances have been extensive ; and although his religious opinions have generally differed materially from those of the community around us, I do not recollect an instance in which they did not cheerfully accord to him the name of Christian.”

He was a devout man, and loved to give expression to his religious feelings in prayer, singing, and other similar exercises ; loved to join with any sincere, honest, and earnest fellow Christians in doing so. He, therefore, found himself in such agreement in this particular, with the various classes of professed Christians that prevailed in the orthodox region in which he spent the most of his professional days, that in discussing their points of difference, they would quite naturally be mutually lenient and re-

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spectful. The principal topic which they would discuss, would always be, most likely, the final destiny of mankind—whether all would at last be restored or not?—and the allowances which his magnanimous and generous nature would make for his opponents, on the ground of long prevailing darkness and error, and his cheerful hope and confidence, that all must come round on to his side at last, would influence him to such a bearing toward them, that they could not, with any grace, be offended with him. I can now look back and almost see him separate from them, in the most unbounded good humor, and with one of those genial, kind, hearty laughs, which his friend and partner, Dr. Rice, says, “it did one good to hear.” How sad to think that we are to hear one of them, in our hopeful Dale, no more forever! O, the *reckless haste* that has bereaved us! It is hard to be tolerant towards anything so terribly destructive in its results, and so inexcusable—yet must we submit, with what of Philosophy and Religion we can command.

Had Dr. Wilmarth resided in Leverett or vicinity, at a later day—after the great Anti-Slavery question began thoroughly to agitate the whole country—as thoroughly as now; his discussion with the profes-

sors of religion might not have been so amicable as they were. The Church can better bear to have the torch light of reason and benevolence applied to its Theology, however offensive that may be, than it can the Ithuriel spear of truth to its position and practices in regard to the "Peculiar Institution" of the Republic. Whoso does this latter, withdrawing fellowship from it also, on account of its pro-slavery character, will be likely to become a prey, however sincere his purpose, and excellent his character. And to such a stand was Dr. Wilmarth gradually advancing when he first took up his residence at Hopedale. We have already seen that one of his reasons for declining the offer of the Methodists to receive him into their communion, after having cut him off from the "Class"—in which he was sometimes a "leader"—was, that he considered "connection with any Sect much less important than formerly." After this, the inclination to stand aloof from personal union with the Sects grew into a purpose to do so; the purpose finally growing into great strength, and making him, in theory and in practice, a disfellowshiper of all pro-slavery churches, however "devout and spiritually minded" they might be. Still he remained tolerant towards the Church, even to the

end of his life—some of us thought, a little too tolerant. The “*piety*” in it continued to weigh much with him, as did also the “*forms*” into which that piety was put ; and so active and strong were his religious feelings, and so urgent for expression, that wherever he found a “conference meeting,” in which men and women appeared sincere, honest, and earnest in the services peculiar to such a meeting, there he found pleasure and profit ; and he was prevented from full fellowship and union with the more radical class of reformers, because he thought they too much neglected this devotional religion and the common manifestations of it.

He was not, indeed, one of your Christians of mere *feeling* ; and much religious excitement he always opposed. He understood perfectly the difference between passion and principle ; having rational and philosophical, as well as true Christian views, respecting the whole subject. It was as important means and aids to a good and useful life, that he valued social religious meetings, and the ordinary services of them ; and from a sense of duty that he observed them, and urged their observance upon others. He often spoke against being under the guidance of the “feelings,” so strongly, that some,

not knowing him, would be inclined to think he was rather an opposer, than otherwise, of all internal religion. But where he saw what seemed to him *heart-religion* manifested, whether in private or in public; and saw, also, in harmony with it, a "well ordered life and godly conversation;" he was disposed to be very charitable, even if the highest stand was not taken in reference to slavery and its kindred abominations. He would excuse them upon the ground of the long reign of error and of darkness throughout Christendom—in which the blind had been leading the blind—rather than deny them the Christian name, and wholly disfellowship them. Never was he a man to conceal the truth, whether theoretical or practical, or to compromise it in the least, or to sanction the action of any party, in State or in Church, that did so. He was one of the most firm and unyielding of men, where conscience and principle were at stake; and he would sacrifice himself rather than them. He was not stubborn, but resolute and persistent. Yet, if others, from the force of education, as he thought, would cleave to their churches, though those churches were pro-slavery, he would not entirely disfellowship them, or withdraw from their meetings. He would oppose and rebuke the wrong—this was

always expected of him—but continue to worship with the *unenlightened*, unconscious supporters of that wrong.

Notwithstanding, then, he loved theological controversy, and was much engaged in it; and was able, also, to explain, defend, and enforce his unpopular Restorationism, with a talent, skill, and ingenuity, which it was hard to resist or answer, his candor and honesty were so manifest, and his internal and external conformity to the Gospel, so undeniable, that he was recognized as a Christian by all parties. Mr. Field writes to me, on this point, as follows: “The different religious Sects in this vicinity have been obliged to respect Dr. Wilmarth, not only as a man, but as a Christian; though some of them, I think, would have gladly found some fault in him, on account of his peculiar theological views.” And Dr. Rice—himself an orthodox church member—says: “If I ever was convinced of a person’s Christianity by his conduct toward his fellow-men, I was convinced of Dr. Wilmarth’s.”

But that Dr. Wilmarth did not, after all, hold the popular religion in high estimation, notwithstanding his charity towards it, and that his faith in it was diminishing, will appear from the following extract

from one of his letters to Mr. Field. He says, under date of April 1st, 1850 :

\* \* " I am heartily sick, as well as you, of this unmeaning cant in religion, wherever it exists. If there is a God, or Good, a Savior, a Gospel, a Holy Spirit, a Divine Revelation, there is some meaning, some design, in them ; and some object to be secured by them, besides slavery and war, covetousness and idolatry, pride and pleasure. This will be acknowledged by all the religionists of the present day ; but what is the practice of the mass ? Are they doing anything to put away the great social evils that afflict Humanity, and to establish the kingdom of righteousness and peace on earth ? How much have the churches of L—— done ?—the Orthodox and Baptist churches, or the Unitarian and Universalist societies ? How much has the Perfectionist Minister done ? I will not judge. Many of these religionists have a ' zeal for God ; '—sanctity enough, observance of times and days enough ; and they are well enough disposed and good neighbors enough, (in many cases,)—especially to *friends* : good *citizens* enough—ah ! there is the great difficulty, they are *too* good citizens. [Meaning too good supporters of an unchristian government.] And whilst they remain so, they must of necessity support the present order of pride, covetousness, mammonism, oppression and violence. O, that those old, kind-hearted, friends of mine, could *see* the position

they are in, and love to be in—continually counter-acting the government and kingdom of God on earth! Then they would immediately change their positions and relations in reference to the giant sins of our land—so it seems to me. But they are blinded by education.”

## CHAPTER IV.

**His religion, a practical one—His abolitionism, religious—His interest in the “Practical Christian” movement of Adin Ballou and his associates—Visits Millville at the Ordination of Wm. H. Fish—His impressions of the meeting—His lamentation over the “Restorationist” cause—Non-Resistance—His connection with “Fraternal Community”—Letters.**

DR. WILMARTH'S Restorationism was not a mere Theology—a “Body of Divinity,” without a Soul—which he had only received into his intellect as a *reasonable* system ; but it was a Religion of the heart and life, quite as much as of the understanding. Its very essence was the love of God, as the Supreme and Universal Love—the equal Friend and Father of all—and the love of mankind, as having one common origin, interest, and final destiny. “The Father worketh hitherto,” said Jesus—worketh in the great work of Universal Reconciliation—“and I work”—work to the same end, and *because* “the Father” worketh. Such also was the point of moral vision which Dr. Wilmarth occupied—such his *principle*



and his impulse and motive. He did not think that God was to be "worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing;" nor that He should be merely adored and praised, as the All-Good; but *imitated*. He believed, and he *felt* what he believed, that as God is good unto all—and unchangeably so, pitying even the most erring and sinful, desiring their recovery, and ever seeking to overcome their evil with good, and to render them holy and happy, so should it be with man—with the professed Christian especially. His views of God and of his Government, and benevolent purposes concerning the whole human race, prepared him, therefore, for the adoption of every legitimate doctrine or principle evolved from those views, however new and astounding, and for the espousal of every reform, however radical and unpopular, which promised, in his judgment, good to mankind, or to any particular class of mankind. Though he believed in universal unity and happiness as the ultimate of God's will and work, he had no idea that this would be brought about solely by a divine and miraculous agency, either this side of the grave, or the other; but by the coöperation of man—perhaps of angels and spirits—with Christ and God. He did not think

that any sinner could reasonably hope to be saved by the "grace of God," or by death, or by mere resurrection from the grave, or by all of these combined, unless he himself was also penitent, and desired and sought forgiveness and heaven. According to his view, the only way that any one can be saved, either in time or in eternity, is voluntarily to return to his Father, after the example of "the prodigal son," in the inimitable parable given to the world by its Savior. And as he believed thus of individual salvation, so he believed of social salvation. He did not believe in literally *waiting* till "the day of God's power," for either the one or the other; but in going at once, and prayerfully, earnestly at work to secure them both.

Hence he was an ABOLITIONIST. Of this, however, I have spoken in another place. But I may here appropriately observe, that though his natural humanity and benevolence made him hostile to slavery, and an advocate of emancipation; his religious Faith confirmed and strengthened him in the position. He had too much conscience and good sense, and too much regard for consistency, to advocate the Universal Paternity of God, the Universal Brotherhood of Mankind, and Universal Restoration, to aid

in withholding the essential rights of the Common Family, from any fragment of it, however weak, unfortunate, and even inferior, that fragment might be. Had *he* been pro-slavery to any extent, he would have stood in perpetual self-condemnation before his Christian Ideal and before his profession. Hence his anti-slavery, to a great extent, was *religious* anti-slavery. In sympathizing with the oppressed, he felt that he was rendering obedience to the precepts: "Weep with them that weep": "Remember them that are in bonds as bound with them." The Gospel of Christ was to him a Gospel that requires slaveholders and their abettors to "let the oppressed go free," and that "they break every yoke."

But he did not stop at Abolitionism, in reform. When, in 1839, the "Standard of Practical Christianity," the substance of which is now the moral and religious basis of The Hopedale Community, was first made known to the world, through the "Independent Messenger," he at once took it into serious consideration, and soon after, fully accepted it as a faithful and important reassertion of Primitive Christianity. Of this Standard, NON-RESISTANCE, the doctrine of overcoming Evil with Good, was the

central Idea and animating spirit ; and the period of its adoption and publication, became a memorable one to all its friends—especially to those who first signed it. It was the nucleus of a new religious “Communion,” which gradually drew around itself, from various quarters, a few kindred and congenial spirits, who were longing for a new and more practical exhibition of Christianity. This Communion held “Quarterly Conferences,” generally in the Towns in which the ministers belonging to it lived, but mostly at Mendon and Millville, Br. Adin Ballou’s and my own locations. These, Dr. Wilmarth was much interested about, though he was at so great a distance from them, and his professional duties were such, that he could not often personally attend them.

But to go back a brief period : A short time previous to this new movement of ours, he had visited Millville, where I was then preaching, to attend a meeting of the Massachusetts Association of Restorationists, at which meeting I was ordained as a Minister of the Gospel ; and soon after his return home, he wrote Br. Ballou the following letter, from which it will be learned that he had become greatly dissatisfied with the then existing order of things

among us, and was intensely longing for some new and higher manifestations of Christianity.

I would say, however, before giving the letter, that at this meeting of our Association, a discussion sprung up between the conservative and the reform branches of it, which made the season one of considerable excitement, and that indicated, very clearly, the near approach of the *end* of the Organization. It was, therefore, in some respects, an unpleasant, and yet, on the whole, a profitable and an effective meeting. But here are Dr. Wilmarth's impressions—his impressions of the *first* general meeting he had ever attended among us, and which was also the first personal interview he had ever had with any of our number, as it was likewise the first time I had ever seen him—though I was so much occupied that I was able to form but a very slight acquaintance with him:

“ *Leverett, Dec. 8, 1839.*

“ RESPECTED BROTHER:

“ Little did I think, after having formed so agreeable and interesting an acquaintance with you and your family, that so long a time would elapse before I should communicate some of my thoughts and feelings to you. But our days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle; and while we are busy here and

there, we are rapidly hastening down the stream of time, with scarcely opportunity to compliment our friends, and say, farewell. I have often thought of the visit I made to Mendon, the Conference at Millville, &c. I have desired an opportunity to converse with you on the subjects presented at that time, and on men and things in general. I was somewhat disappointed in some manifestations ; for I had hoped better things than I saw.

“ But to come down to the present time : Where is our Organ\*—the once struggling, yet true and faithful ‘*Messenger*,’ edited by Adin Ballou and E. M. Stone ? Alas ! ‘fallen from grace.’ Am I too severe and uncharitable ? Is the fault in me ? If so, pray correct me.

“ True, I am an acknowledged agent ; but I cannot in conscience recommend such a paper amidst the tide of opposition, prejudice and misrepresentation of our views around me. I am ashamed to stand up and say, ‘Here is my religious Journal ; examine it candidly ; see if we do not advocate pure and undefiled religion.’ It gives me pain to have occasion to make these remarks ; but where are the solemn and interesting sermons, the beautiful extracts, the learned and candid discussions, the good

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\*This was “The Independent Messenger,” first published and edited, at Mendon, by Br. Adin Ballou, and afterwards removed to Boston, where it fell into quite different hands and became emphatically of *this world*.

articles on abolition, temperance, &c., which we once saw in it? Going, *gone*, (almost.) True, a gleam of hope revived in my breast at the 'Declaration of Sentiments,' published in it lately; and it touched a kindred chord. I hoped for more; but hope has been deferred.

"I now hear occasionally from you, dear brother, through the columns of the *Liberator*, which, by the way, is the most straight-forward, independent, unshackled and liberal paper, with which I am acquainted. Your remarks at the annual meeting of the Non-Resistance Society have touched a kindred chord in my heart. Such sentiments must overcome all opposition. They are the *truth* and must prevail. I sincerely thank you for the light shed on my mind on this subject. I have long found the elements of Non-Resistance in my heart, and have advocated it in my feeble and unlearned manner. But I was unable to meet all the objections, in an intelligent and truly philosophical and Christian way. I now feel better qualified.

"O, when will Christians learn to let the light of the Gospel of Peace shine forth in such a way as to lead others to glorify their Father in Heaven? How can a Christian fight, oppress, or go to law? I almost say it is impossible; but I must be charitable. Yet this much I will dare to say: the popular Standard of religion is exceedingly low, so low it is scarcely seen above the crowd of worldly minded, vain, de-

generate men. Notwithstanding all the benevolent enterprises of the day, how very little of the *spirit* of Christ is manifested by his professed followers! How little obedience to that first and great commandment and the one like unto it, in which the Law and the Prophets are all summed up! We have religious machinery enough; enough of outward observances, perhaps; but where is the *spirit* of Christianity? When will it be seen that the kingdom of Christ is 'not of this world,' and that if we are friends to the world [its wickedness] we are the enemies of God? May God have mercy on the world, and 'deliver it from this bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.' Thanks to his name for the gift of his Son to redeem us, and purify us from all iniquity.

"Yours fraternally,

"B. WILMARTH.

"Adin Ballou."

The views and feelings which Dr. Wilmarth expressed in the foregoing letter, in reference to the prevalence of the spirit of conservatism and worldliness in the Association; and that was weekly exhibiting itself through the columns of The Independent Messenger, (which was then edited by a new man who had come among us, but was not *of* us,) were the general views and feelings of all those of our members, who were engaged in the various reforms

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of the time, and beginning to think seriously of Socialism. It was these very views and feelings that influenced them to take their new position before the world, and finally to unite together for the establishment of a Fraternal Community. Hence, as we were thus alike in our dissatisfaction with things as they were, and in our desires and aspirations for a more Christian social state, when we took the first step toward the realization of our Ideal, Dr. Wilmarth very naturally sympathized with us, and bid us "God speed" in our efforts. When Brs. Adin Ballou, David R. Lamson, Daniel S. Whitney, Geo. W. Stacy, and myself, started "The Practical Christian," in 1840, he took a most hearty and active interest in it, and aided in its circulation to the extent of his ability. He said in a letter to Br. Ballou: "As to the contemplated 'PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN,' I wish I was able to take a hundred copies, and scatter them broadcast over this moral wilderness. But I am poor in this world, and always shall be. My principles forbid my taking the usual course of this crooked and perverse generation to acquire the treasures of earth; I know how it is done; but if I cannot have the treasures of earth and heaven too, by all means may I have the *durable*

riches. I presume I can get a few subscribers, and I will venture to become responsible for six copies ; and will get as many more as I can, provided the work is issued."

The general awakening among us in behalf of Piety and Philanthropy, of which "The Practical Christian" was the public Herald and Representative, constituted in his life, as in ours, a new era ; and he began earnestly and zealously to agitate the matter in the general region through which he was so constantly, as a popular Physician, circulating. Besides his excellent wife, he found one only who understandingly and fully sympathized and acted with him, and that was his long-tried and highly valued friend, Br. Phineas Field. These things gradually prepared him for the Community Movement, which was then silently maturing among us, and particularly in Br. Ballou's study, and which was so soon to be commended to the Public, both in a theoretical and a practical form. Consequently, when the subject was first opened in "The Practical Christian" by an editorial article from the pen of Br. Ballou, designed principally as a *feeler* of the common pulse, more particularly among reformers and our special friends, the Dr. was ready to hail it as an auspicious

sign of the introduction of a Christian and harmonious order of society. He, therefore, wrote to Br. Ballou, under date of Jan. 4th, 1841, as follows:

“ I was very glad to see the subject of ‘ Communities’ opened for discussion in the P. C. I have long desired to see some plan devised and adopted, whereby Christians ‘ of like precious faith,’ might enjoy their ‘ portion under the sun,’ free from the hindrances to spiritual, and even temporal happiness and improvement, so common in an isolated state, and where the temptations to avarice and covetousness might be measurably or wholly removed, and also the disabilities consequent on being associated with ‘ wicked and unreasonable men.’ Often have questions like these revolved in my mind: Must I live and die amidst oppression, proscription, dishonesty and mental slavery? Must my religious views be bounded by creeds and confessions originated in the dark ages? Must I be denied the right to think, to reason and speak, or be branded a heretic or fanatic? Or in temporal things, must I keep an everlasting vigilance, lest I be defrauded of my rights, and the avails of honest industry? This state of things is insupportable to the free mind. But what is the remedy for all these difficulties? Shall I abandon all intercourse with my fellow men, and become a hermit of the wilderness? or retire to some dungeon of a convent? No: this is not in conformity to the physical, intellectual and moral

constitution of man. He is a social being and needs the assistance and sympathy of his fellows. I am for the highest perfection man's nature is capable of; and I know he can never enjoy his portion or place, which his Maker designed for him, but in conformity to the physical, organic and moral laws of the universe. The Bible and Science, I believe, are the best and only directories to the attainment of the knowledge necessary to perfect happiness. I find that the plan of 'Communities' was adopted by the primitive Christians, as one means of happiness and improvement. I know it is objected that this was a particular case for the time being, &c. I will not stop to answer the objection, which can easily be done. Suffice it to say, the objection is made by those who believe Christians may and ought to take part in supporting the Government and other oppressive and vindictive institutions of this world; whereas my faith is, that our 'kingdom is not of this world,' therefore we should not fight.

"On seeing your 'rough sketch,' as you please to call it, I immediately wrote a few remarks on the different questions and articles, because I had faith in such 'small things;' but deferred sending them, expecting that the subject would be discussed by abler pens than mine. And now it appears the plan has matured rather more silently than I expected, and I shall therefore omit remarking upon it much, till I see the Constitution, &c. I will just say, I

approved of most of the 'sketch.' Question 3d I thought objectionable on the ground of opening a door to the temptation of striving to be greatest, and to have the best locations, &c. The common stock principle I look upon as a sovereign cure for covetousness. I also object to the transfer of shares, lest it open a door to speculation, (let all secular business be transacted by a good economical committee,) and the setting off for exclusive possession; but should any wish to leave the Community, let them have the value of their property in money and depart in peace. I have no more fault to find at present, and would give my reasons more fully for this, had I room and time.

"I am for all the individuality that is practicable—liberty of conscience, the sacred institution of marriage, distinct families, &c.; but cannot understand how a 'Community' can enjoy individuality as it respects *property*. I think they are incompatible; and some individual rights must be relinquished in order to enjoy the greater blessings."

The inquiring and suggestive article in The Practical Christian, referred to in the foregoing letter, elicited even more attention and called out more friends than was anticipated. At the same time, Rev. George Ripley, of Boston, and his associates, afterwards of "Brook Farm" Community, were seriously considering the same general question, and

had resolved upon carrying their views into practical operation. On learning, therefore, that some of us were moving in the matter, meeting us at a Non-Resistance Convention in Boston, they suggested that we have a mutual consultation of the two parties in reference to it ; which we accordingly did, at Mr. Ripley's house. And there was such a unanimity of general feeling, principle and purpose then and there manifested, that the first purpose was, that we should combine together, and start a Community somewhere in New England, with a Practical Christian Test of membership. Mr. Ripley himself, particularly, inclined to this ; but some of his associates, thinking that such a Test would make the enterprise too narrow and exclusive, it was finally decided that each class would do better to stand by itself, and select different locations on which to experiment with their different views and plans. Hopedale and Brook Farm, soon, therefore, sprung into existence—the former continuing to this day, and the latter having been abandoned for these five or more years ; though some of the members are still among the most zealous advocates of Association : Mr. Ripley, I believe is, though not at present engaged in any practical movement of the kind. Rev. Wm. H.

Channing, a leading spirit among them, and one of the purest, most loving and excellent men of the Age, has ever since been earnest and enthusiastic in the cause, and is now, I understand, making arrangements to become a resident member of the "Raritan Bay Union," in New Jersey—a new Community which has lately been started on what is said to be a very beautiful site, and with fair prospects of success. But this *en passant*.

As soon as it was decided to make a beginning at Hopedale, Br. Ballou applied to Br. Wilmarth, by letter, to know "what he thought of the object, and what he was ready to do for it"? and his reply was: "I like the object, and I will endeavor to seek divine direction, and to follow where Providence opens the way, and do what I can. But I must write again, to tell you of my situation, difficulties, &c., unless, indeed, the way should open for me to visit you in "Conference," or some time soon, which I hope may be my privilege, and then I will fully disclose my mind. May the Lord prosper the undertaking, (if consistent with His will,) and happy should I be, I now think, if I could be one of your number."

The following letter appears to be the one promised

in the foregoing extract, and states some of the "difficulties" of his situation :

*" Leverett, May 8, 1841. .*

" DEAR BROTHER :

" I have many things to say to you, but cannot, with pen and paper, communicate a hundredth part. I wish, however, to ask a few questions. How prospers the contemplated Community? What class or classes of men or women have joined? Are they, as a body, virtuous, pious and intelligent? Are they professional or ordinary laborers? How much money is now subscribed? &c. I purposed to have attended the last Conference, with a good Christian friend and brother, Phineas Field. But when the time came, I had two patients very sick and unwilling I should leave them. But we both feel a deep interest in the progress of the contemplated new Social State. We cannot bear to drag out a weary life—though short at most—in the present disordered state of things. The longer I live, the more I see of 'wrong and outrage,' hypocrisy and false-heartedness. Why, it is not expected that man will 'speak every one the truth to his neighbor,' and look on another's things and property as well as his own! Is there no help, no remedy? I do not complain of my fellow men in this section, as being sinners above all others. Far otherwise. I am pleasantly situated, comparatively. Neighbors are kind, respectful; all I wish, and more than I deserve.



But the prevailing public sentiment on many vital points, and the general current is in a wrong direction; *very wrong*—or else the Bible is no guide, and I have lost my reason.

“But what can I do? I am poor in this world’s goods; my secular affairs are in a bad shape for me to move, at present. I am owing several hundred dollars, but have several hundred due; enough, perhaps, to balance and leave me the small farm on which I live, worth about \$1,000. I have labored much in my profession for twelve years past; lived and moved in very plain, and what the world calls, ‘unfashionable’ style. Yet still I am poor, and I could tell the reason, were it worth while. I now have an aged father and mother-in-law living with me, and am so harnessed up I know not what to do. I have been on the point, at times, of going with the current, adopting the customs of the world, and sailing down the stream of life in luxury and ease. But a voice from the Word and Spirit of God has hitherto sustained and kept me back from such presumptuous sins. Thanks to that blessed influence, and not to me.

“You ask me, or would like to know, what are my views of the ‘Community,’ and whether I feel disposed to do something to forward the undertaking? I answer: I like the plan and Constitution, so far as I understand them. But how to make them practicable to *me*, I find not at present. Would it

were otherwise. I wish, however, to know where it is expected to be located, and whether the money for shares must be advanced now ; also, whether I can enjoy any privilege, or confer any aid, by money or otherwise, and remain where I am ? I know already the advantages must be small, if any, unless we live in a compact neighborhood. Please write and tell me all you can. Br. Field is very anxious to hear and know more about it, also.

“I should be glad to say something about our Paper, (the P. C.) I admire it—ay, more ; I love the doctrines it advocates, and the brethren who contribute to its columns. I have sent it round to many friends ; but have urged none to take it. All *say* they like it ; yet I have not so many subscribers as I thought it probable I should have by this time. I think I know the reason—it is too pure for these corrupt times. May the blessing of God attend your labors, and the labors of all who are contending for the Faith.

“ Farewell,

“ BUTLER WILMARTH.

“Adin Ballou.”

Near the close of the year 1841, Dr. Wilmarth attended one of our Quarterly Conferences at Mendon, of which he wrote on his return, in a letter to Br. Ballou : “The Conference I was well pleased with, and was much profited, as was also Br. Field ;

and, if by watchful care, self-denial and perseverance, we can maintain the spirit and practice manifested on that occasion, we shall be 'that happy people whose God is the Lord.' Our visit to Mendon has caused considerable excitement, and all sorts of remarks, from solemn warnings to low ridicule ; 'but none of these things move me.' I am resolved, by the grace of God, to lend my influence to help build up a better religious and social Fabric in the world, than any hitherto known to me. I have labored single-handed for many years, and the most that I can say I have effected is to maintain my integrity and *live*. Thanks to the power and preserving grace of God, that I have not been carried down the current to destruction ! Now I hope to see a company of one heart and one mind, 'kindly affectioned one toward another ; diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'

"O, Divine Goodness ! how unbounded, how universal thou art ! ever reaching to the unthankful and evil. How little do we appreciate the benevolence of our heavenly Father ! I am astonished at myself, that I have lived so long, without knowing more and being better. But I have been carried along with the flood, though often very unwillingly,

and sometimes feebly resisting the current ; and then the waves would foam and rage, and nearly overwhelm my soul. I cannot 'live at this poor dying rate' any longer, and I pant for living streams and hunger for substantial food. How long will it be ere the Gospel will have free course and be glorified ? Now, Monarchs, Warriors, Statesmen, Players, have the praise and honor due to the Lord ! Yet, (bless the Lord, my soul,) He has not left himself without witnesses ; for here and there there is an humble soul, who has courage to mount upward and pursue its way to God ; and I hope to see the number increase, like the stars for multitude. May we of the contemplated 'Fraternal Community,' raise the Standard and rally around it !"

The following letter was written only a week or two before a few members of the Community took possession of their location in Milford, and commenced operations :

*" Leverett, March 21, 1842.*

DEAR BROTHER :

I am weary with the labors of the day, and it is now past 10 o'clock at night ; still, I feel anxious to write you a few lines, since I cannot consistently visit you. I have been much hurried in practice ever since I came from Mendon. There have been

some severe cases of lung fever, croup, measles, &c., in town, and I am frequently called to Shutesbury, Wendell, Montague, and Amherst ; and although I gave out word that when I returned from Mendon, I should not practice for a season, few or none paid any regard to it. And so it goes, and will go, till I ' go hence to be here no more ;' unless I change my place, or adopt some new method to lighten my labors. I like labor ; but *drudgery*, night and day, and opposition at every turn, I am tired of. There is so much to be done, and there are so few disposed to aid in the alleviation of human misery, that it disheartens me ; and I am frequently led, while passing the resting places of the dead, weary and careworn, to adopt the language of the wise man, and ' praise the dead who are already dead, more than the living who are yet alive ;' and were it not for the *hope* of better things, in both this and the coming world, I should strongly desire to depart from this world of sin, misery and woe. But I have *hope*, I have *faith*, that ' grace will abound' as far as sin has abounded. Earth has no wounds so deep and dangerous that Heaven cannot heal. O, no : ' there is balm in Gilead and a Physician there'—Society must be reorganized.

“ Man must be brought to love his fellow-man. The principles of purity, peace and love can cure our deepest woes. There is no need of strife and war, oppression and covetousness. They are utterly

forbidden by Him who seeks our highest good. O, what a wretch and fool is man ! destroying his own and his neighbors' peace, 'kicking against the pricks.' The more I contemplate the present state of Society and the world, the more I see the folly, ingratitude and wickedness of man, and the need of a deep and radical reform. This skimming the surface is of no avail. Little or nothing but froth is gained by all the labor and machinery of old measures and new measures, whether religious, political or commercial, while the social state continues as at present, one vast arena of corruption, fraud and covetousness. But who calls *this* idolatry ?

“ Not, however, to dwell farther on the dark side, let us turn our talents and our little capital to the best account, in contributing to reform, improve and redeem ourselves from the captivity of Babylon ; and by the favor of God we shall prosper. Our principles are fast gaining upon the human mind, but men do not perceive it yet. Ministers now and then preach a good Non-Resistance discourse ; but as yet it don't mean any thing. But the veil over the mind is of thinner texture than formerly, and the real heaven-born soul will burst it soon, and see that Christ's words meant *practice* as well as theory. God in mercy speed the day !

I send the promised \$200 by William Howard, a worthy neighbor, whom you will receive as myself, and if you have an opportunity to write a line by

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him, so do ; if not, as soon as convenient. I always have a feast when I hear from you. That kindred feeling and spirit which my brethren feel, and send me in their epistles, revives my spirit, and strengthens my faith, hope, and charity. We had a blessed visit from Br. Stacy, and I trust some seed fell on good ground. I hope the time may come this season that Br. Ballou can visit Leverett, filled with the blessings of the gospel of peace.

“Fraternally yours,

“B. WILMARTH.”

“Fraternal Community No. 1,”—now “The Hopedale Community”—commenced practical operations on its Domain in April, 1842 ; but, as was to be expected of so novel an experiment, differences of opinion soon sprung up among its members, respecting the mode of carrying out the principles of the Enterprise, and the result was, a degree of discord, and finally a division. This was a great grief to Br. Wilmarth, who hoped for uninterrupted harmony in the new order of society ; and he wrote about the matter to Br. Ballou in much depression of spirits. The concluding part of the following extract of a letter from him, under date of Jan. 18, 1843, will show how great a disappointment and sorrow possessed him on the occasion, as also his desire for brotherly love and harmony. He very naturally

exaggerated a little, the extent and permanency of the evil :

“ I will now inform you what I think, and how I feel and act. I am at home, and my family are all well and enjoying peace and life in the first degree. But ‘ Millerism ’ is rife, and all around is wind, and fire, and storm, and earthquake, and eruption. There is a breaking up of the foundations of the political and moral fabric ; ‘ men’s ’ hearts are failing them for fear,’ and it is not without effort that one can keep his balance amidst so much agitation and concussion. ‘ Many are at their wits’ end, and reel to and fro like a drunken man.’ I look with confidence for the ‘ still small voice ’ of truth to succeed this scene of commotion, transition, and *isms*.

“ I intended to visit Hopedale the first sleighing ; but sickness in the vicinity prevented. I wanted and meant to have been present at the Annual Meeting ; but could not consistently. I now hope to visit you the first good traveling. My expected professional partner, Dr. Rice, is with us now, and bids fair to become eminent and useful in his profession, and soon to relieve me from some of my labors and cares, so that I can be more at liberty to think, converse and visit. I intend to visit the ‘ Community ’ at Northampton very soon—only 12 miles distant—thence to New Lebanon, or some other Shaker Village, and learn what principles of economy and government are in operation among them ; and so on to

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the end of the chapter of Communities within my reach, (if the Lord will.) The Christian Community *idea* is continually revolving in my mind, and why I wish to visit various Associations is, to draw out and collect the *good* and avoid the bad of all, and then form a settled opinion, and apply what moral and physical force I have where it will *tell most* for the redemption of our common humanity from the thralldom, of sin, misery and wretchedness, every where manifested in the shape of fraud, violence, corruption, poverty, sickness, despair and death. I *have* hoped and continue to *hope* that 'Hopedale' will prove to be the *place* where pure and intelligent minds will apply their highest powers to the best advantage, for the pulling down of the strong holds of sin, and building up the Redeemer's kingdom. But I must confess my faith was somewhat shaken by what I witnessed when last there.

"Had I been told of such a change six months ago, as has taken place, by any but an *enemy*, I should have repelled the charge by reference to our principles—our *rock* foundation on eternal truths; and I should scarcely have been less surprised to hear that those rugged hills that skirt our 'Dale of Hope' had on a sudden cloven asunder by volcanic pressure, poured forth a stream of lava from earth's mighty furnace, dried up the 'gentle stream,' and filled that fertile vale, from hill to hill, and buried all our hopes and comforts in one common grave,

than I was to hear of the eruptions in our moral and social relations, which have been witnessed since my visit to Hopedale. To the former I would try to be resigned, and say, *Amen*; for then the free spirit would wing its way to brighter skies, more fertile fields and genial climes, and bask around the throne of the Eternal, and rejoice forever.

“ But my heart almost sinks within me when I look back a year, and remember what strong chords of brotherly love have been broken! Why is it so? Must the prophecies of a gainsaying world prove true? Shall we fail to carry out those heavenly principles of which we made our boast? Is our movement impracticable? Or are my views and feelings, as to the bad state of things among you, imaginary? I should rejoice to see the proof of the latter.

“ If I had pecuniary means at my command, they should be freely given to forward our enterprise; but since I have not, such as I have I give, viz., sympathy, counsel, encouragement, and reproof for what I deem wrong, asking the same from you, my Br., in return. I am very sorry any good members have felt it their duty to dissolve their connexion with the Community. I hope no more will do so, and that those who have will return, and that we shall all get right and keep so, and unite, heart and hand, in building up the Redeemer's kingdom on earth. I think it was a *mistake* that so many assem-

bled on the farm last Spring ; what then ? Why, let some go away for a season, work out, live short—do any rightful way—only let brotherly love continue, and the strong bear the infirmities of the weak. I know I come short of the glory of God in all things ; and therefore feel diffident in writing as I have done ; but receive it from your long-tried and ever-loving friend,

“ BUTLER WILMARTH.

“ Adin Ballou.”

The extract that follows, is from a letter of a little later date than the foregoing, and is a further expression of his intense desire for unity at Hopedale. It also reveals his liberality and charity. He says :

“ It is a hard thing for me to give up old, long-tried and beloved friends, kindred minds, (Adhesiveness large,) and nothing but positive immorality on their part can make me do so. To be sure I differ from many of them in opinion, but that I think no reason why our spirits should not meet and mingle like kindred drops, where both are pure in motive and conscientious in action. I cannot rest, therefore, till harmony, that heavenly harmony that once existed at Hopedale, and of which I often boasted, is restored ; and I have too much confidence in *all* the pioneers of our enterprise, (Marvelousness large,) to give up the pleasing, the heart-cheering prospect that we shall yet all be actively united in building up a spiritual temple for the Lord, and an asylum

for suffering humanity, (Benevolence large.) What though some may be rough and unshapen—none, I trust, are rotten: The axe, the hammer, the square, with time and patience, will bring all to their proper dimensions, and then the plane will smooth the surface; and though some may not be so large and important as was anticipated in the quarry or the forest, yet all will be of use and must be put *in* the building, and not *out* of it. The whole edifice may fall for the want of a very small key or brace, (Hope.) Our avowed principles will bring all things into harmony, if lived out; and may we not anticipate as sublime and transcendent effects from their operation as Heathen Philosophers attributed to the power of *Music*, in bringing the present order of things out of chaos?

“ ‘From harmony, from heavenly harmony,  
 This universal Frame began;  
 When Nature underneath a heap  
 Of jarring atoms lay,  
 And could not heave her head,  
 The tuneful voice was heard from high—  
*Arise*, ye more than dead!  
 Then hot and cold, and moist and dry,  
 In order to their stations leap,  
 And Music's power obey.  
 From harmony, from heavenly haamony,  
 This universal Frame began;  
 From harmony to harmony,  
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
 The diapason closing *full in man.*' ”

“This is *poetry*; howbeit, I cannot give up the idea of Christian Communities living in harmony, based on the principle of *equality* in all the rights, privileges and blessings of life.”

Next follows a letter from Br. W., to the resident members of The Hopedale Community, which was written in a hopeful tone, and informed them of his purpose soon to make his home in their midst :

“*Leverett, Jan. 27, 1844.*

“**BELoved BRETHREN AND SISTERS:**

“I suppose you will be looking for us to join your happy company soon; and we also look forward to the same event with joy and hope. (‘If the Lord will, we shall live and do this.’) But we are not likely to be with you so soon as I told you when I left Hopedale. Various causes have transpired to detain us in L. a little longer. A multiplicity of business and visiting, tardiness of old customers in settling their accounts, cold weather, some sickness, &c.—these conspire to keep us here—no doubt for the best. I do not intend to fret about it. We are all well now and in very comfortable circumstances. I will not at present set any time when we shall start for Hopedale; but it will take two weeks at least to close our business and visits, at the rate we have run since I came home. We will work fast as we can, consistently with health and a quiet mind; for we are all anxious to be among you and enjoy the bless-

ings of peace, brotherly love, sympathy and congeniality of spirit, which we hope now prevail, and ever will prevail, among the members and residents of F. C. No. 1. I am not expecting absolute perfection ; nay, I am constrained to confess that 'in many things we offend all.' But if, with all the advantages and privileges we have, and may have at Hopedale, there is not some approximation toward that perfection required of us under the new covenant, great will be our condemnation, yea, we shall justly be called least in the kingdom of heaven, if we are not wholly cast out of it. O ! let us never give occasion for those who pass by to mock at us, saying, they 'began to build and were not able to finish,' either the moral, social or physical temple contemplated.

"I sometimes fear we have not all counted the cost and sacrifices of Christianity in its purity. There is at the present day little or no satisfaction in becoming a current Christian, at nearly all the Christian banks in the world. All that is required in order to pass current is, a 'confession of sins,' a 'confession of faith,' a strict observance of outward ordinances, days, &c. But what is this more than the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, which will never entitle its possessor to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven. 'Except a man deny himself and take up his cross, he cannot be my disciple,' said Jesus. Why ? Because the whole life

and character of Jesus were self-denying and self-sacrificing. What a sacrifice for him, who was infinitely rich, to become poor, that we might be rich ; to die that we might live, to have not where to lay his head that we might have heavenly mansions ! What poor returns of gratitude we make for love like this ! And what less could we expect would be required than that we should deny ourselves—of what ? nothing but what would hurt us to partake of !

“ Language fails to express the beauty, the excellence, the glory of Christianity, as taught and exemplified in the life and death of its Founder. To resist temptation, to overcome an evil propensity, to love an enemy, are victories worth obtaining. It is not only great but glorious. Daily experience teaches me the absolute necessity of overcoming the ‘ world, the flesh and the devil,’ in order to obtain present peace and future glory. It is utterly impossible for us to enter into *that* rest perfectly, till every member, every faculty, and every sense, is brought into subjection to the law of Christ. None of our faculties or propensities need be destroyed, unless they ‘ cause us to offend ;’ but all should be consecrated to their appropriate office, and set apart for the purposes designed by our all-wise Creator, and to no other. Then would that heavenly harmony be seen and heard throughout creation, of which angels once sang, and which must be sung by men

before the Redeemer gives the kingdom up to God again.

“ May we, dear friends, take some humble part in bringing in everlasting righteousness, for we have the ability and the opportunity. We can deny ourselves luxuries, that others may have necessities; we can live in plain houses, that others may be sheltered from the storm; we can labor diligently with our hands and brains, that the sick and infirm may be comforted and fed, the ignorant enlightened, the wanderer reclaimed, the oppressed set free, the murderer forgiven and saved, the warrior taught to beat his weapons of war into agricultural implements, and live in peace. We can render good for evil, and blessing for cursing; we can salute others than our brethren, and love them that love not us;—these things let us do; and may the Father of our spirits give us all the wisdom and strength we need to perfect us in every good word and work.

“ We may rest assured that every work of righteousness, every true testimony, every evil overcome, however small, comparatively, contributes to increase the amount of good and lessen the amount of evil in the universe, and will hasten the long looked-for era, when all shall know the Lord, and men with angels join to sing:

‘ All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;



Good will henceforth from heaven to men,  
Begin and never cease.'

"BUTLER WILMARTH."

## CHAPTER V.

His purpose in leaving Leverett—Enters into partnership with Dr. David Rice—Moves to Hopedale—Reluctantly resumes his profession—Trial of his Allopathic faith and practice—Begins to think favorably of Hydropathy—Goes to New Lebanon Water Cure Establishment, where he remained for a time *incog.*—Writes home favorable reports of his experience and observation—Returns to Hopedale with improved health—His little faith in medicine and great faith in nature, particularly manifest in an interesting Letter to his Son.

SOMETIME before Dr. Wilmarth left Leverett, he began to feel that his best days, in medical practice, were ended, and that his labors had so worn upon him, that he should never again engage in them with the constancy he had done. In looking to Hopedale, therefore, one object that he had in view was *rest*—not inactivity, idleness—but rest in change. This was not, it is true, his prominent object. His prominent object was to coöperate with kindred minds, for the establishment of a divine order of society on earth—the kingdom of God.

He felt, however, that he was unable to ride so

much as he had done, especially nights; and he thought that at Hopedale he might plant and cultivate a Botanic Garden, and obtain a comfortable subsistence by the preparation and sale of medicines, and by attending to what little professional practice he might be called upon for by the members of the Community and the adjacent neighborhood. He had also long contemplated the establishment of some kind of an Infirmary, and supposed that he might, at some time, realize his ideal institution at Hopedale—an ideal, by the way, which floated before him, till, just as he was on the point of reaching it, he was suddenly taken away! Much practice, therefore, outside of the Community, he did not wish, unless it were very necessary. His desires and plans in these particulars, however, he was never able to carry out; and was forced again into his profession. But more of this in another place.

His Leverett friends greatly regretted his intention of leaving them; both on account of not sympathizing in the Associative Movement—as but *very* few, of course, did—and their reluctance to lose their old, long-tried, familiar Physician, in whose medical skill and Christian excellence they had equal confidence. For about a dozen years he had been

with them, visiting amongst them, professionally and otherwise, in the most free and fraternal manner, and being cordially received by them in the same spirit; and it was hard for them to give him up; hard also for him to give them up. The remembrance of many scenes of prosperity and adversity in which they had been united; in which they had rejoiced and wept together, and together grown up to maturity, and advanced toward the grave, whither they had followed not a few of their number—the simple remembrance of these, bound them to each other by new ties, and it was painful even to think of separation. Only a great Christian idea and object—loyalty to conscience, to truth, to God—would have strengthened him to the sacrifice. But he promised that he would not leave them, till he should find a competent and worthy Physician to take his place. Of course there were enough ready to step into such a position, as soon as it was generally known that he purposed relinquishing it; and he might have *sold* it—according to a not uncommon practice among mere *business* men—and several called to ascertain what arrangements they could make with him for it. But he never harbored the thought of making money in such a way; and con-

sidered the vacancy which he should cause, on his departure, free to any one who could fairly secure it.

He, however, in the year 1842, chose a partner in business—David Rice, M. D., of Rowe—an intelligent, well-educated and promising young Physician, in whose qualifications for the situation he had much confidence and hope, and whom, he trusted, the people would generally receive as a competent substitute for himself. His desire was to help them to a Physician who should be skillful in his profession, and upright, worthy, and fraternal in all his relations to them; and such an one, I believe, has Dr. Rice proved to be. He has an honorable standing in his profession; and a wide practice. Dr. Wilmarth and he continued together, as partners, for about two years, and were both, Dr. Rice informs me, “constantly occupied and oppressed with business.” At the expiration of this time, and on the 2d day of March, 1844, Dr. Wilmarth, with his family, started for Hopedale, with the view of making it a permanent home. The Autumn previous, he had been down and built the Ell of his house, into which he moved, immediately on his arrival, and whilst the main building was in process of erection.

own Physician, a brother beloved and highly esteemed, should be employed by us, in our sickness, or whether we should send out of the Community for some one else. Many, of course, were perfectly satisfied with him. But others did raise the question—reluctantly, considerately, regretting the necessity, but nevertheless openly and frankly. The spirit of Hydropathy had got in amongst us, and was spreading like an epidemic. Many of us were determined to have nothing more to do with the contents of “saddle bags,” administer them who might—even “an angel from heaven.” Most firmly and resolutely did we believe in the Gospel according to Priessnitz; and if any physician came to us not preaching and practicing this, we simply turned away from him, thinking ourselves wiser by far. Such an one belonged to the Old Dispensation; we to the New. “No more of your *drugs*,” we said—no more of your calomel especially—the deadly poison. We were so exceedingly zealous for the Water Cure—the “universal panacea”—that we would have almost rather died under its administration, when sick, than to have got well under the administration of the old and “regular” method of depletion and dosing. “Away with it,” we said—“the

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world has had enough of it already, and grows ne better, but rather, worse. We were, perhaps, a little, or *not* a little, extravagant about the matter—but such was our faith and hope—such our words.

But my family, I believe, was the first to be put severely to the test—the first to answer the question as to the propriety of not employing Br. Wilmarth, and going abroad for another doctor. Our little boy—two years old, and an only child—was very severely and dangerously attacked, in the year 1846, with the Dysentery; and we were almost in an agony of suspense, as to what it was best to do for him—especially as Dr. Wilmarth seemed to feel that he would not recover. He had been several times sick; mostly with the diseases common to children; but had never taken any medicine. His mother was somewhat skillful in the management of him with the Water Cure, and had sometimes silently laid aside the “doses” that our former excellent Physician had left for him, to be given *if necessary*. She did not deem it necessary.

But now we were brought to a critical case. We considered Dr. Wilmarth’s knowledge, skill, judgment, and fraternal relation to us and to the Commu-

On becoming a resident at Hopedale, as has already been observed, Dr. Wilmarth did not design devoting himself, to any great extent, to the practice of medicine ; and he, at first, generally refused to do so, though he had many calls. But he had not the means necessary to the opening of the contemplated Botanic Garden, before spoken of, and as no other profitable employment offered, he was compelled partially to resume his profession. He resolved, however, not to ride nights; excepting in great emergencies ; and he made no special efforts to secure practice. What he had was not sought, but came to him. Had he made it publicly known that his services were to be had, by any who would favor him with their patronage, I am sure he would have secured a very large practice. As it was, soon after he commenced going abroad at all, he generally had as many patients as his health would admit of his attending to, and frequently had to send applicants to other physicians.

But he soon found in Hopedale, some unexpected and quite serious trials of his medical faith and practice—trials likewise of his patience. He had come to Hopedale, in the spirit of self-sacrifice, and in the spirit of fraternity ; expecting, of course, as



he had a right to expect, that he would be the Physician of the Community—so long, at any rate, as there was no other one belonging to it. He could not, indeed, have cared particularly for this position on account of the pecuniary advantages of it, even if he had been a selfish man ; for they were necessarily very small ; but there was a point of respect, of honor, involved, which would very naturally touch a very sensitive part of his character. For any not to employ him, would seem to indicate a lack of confidence in him—a serious matter in a “*Fraternal Community*,” where all were mutually pledged to stand by each other, in love and good will, and all kindly offices. He, too, was conscious—modestly so—that his theoretical and practical knowledge of disease and the remedies therefor, together with his age and great experience, entitled him to the place ; and, on no *common* ground, would any of his brethren have questioned that title.

We all probably had as much faith in Dr. Wilmarth and in his practice, as in almost any other physician of the Allopathic School—some of us would have chosen him before any other one. And it was a delicate question to consider, whether our

long opinions and practice. But it was a religious duty with him to "prove all things and hold fast that which was good," and which would promote the welfare of mankind. This is the reason why he was, all through his professional career—as those who knew him, know that he was—an "eclectic." He was never a narrow-minded, exclusive, bigoted, Allopathist; thinking that he and his class were "*the* men, and that wisdom would die with them." He was not shallow enough, nor blind enough, to imagine that the established and popular system of "*Materia Medica*," which had come down from the imperfect and unenlightened Past, was without errors and could not be improved; or that all the great minds that had, from time to time, broken away from it, and set up new systems, were unprincipled Quacks, having no important truths and principles, and deserving only of contempt and reproach. He knew, too, having been "behind the curtains," that the "Regulars" who assumed such a *wise* and *dignified* position, and who would not treat a professed Reformer of Medicine, with common civility, were often governed simply by apprehensions for their craft, their reputations and their pockets. He had no respect for them in this matter.

as they manifestly deserve none from an enlightened, liberal and progressive community. Hence he was ever ready to consult with any physician, of any school, who was sincere, honest, and well informed in his profession.

Dr. W. was neither narrow-minded enough, nor knave enough, to sacrifice a sick man to a point of professional pride or policy ; and was quite as willing that salvation should come out of some lowly as out of some lofty place. It was not in him to turn away from us in a rage, when we sent for Mr. Whitmarsh, doubtful as he was about the propriety of our course ; but he would come in from day to day, to watch the workings of the new and strange treatment, hoping, I doubt not, that the result would be favorable, and the child be restored to vigorous and healthy life. And it was such a marked and critical case—the child was of so frail a constitution and the disease was of so violent and dangerous a type—that the issue set the Dr. seriously to thinking that Hydropathy might, after all, be of great value to the world. He saw that in this case, at least, it had fairly and fully established its claim to respect ; and he acknowledged the fact. His eyes were opened, and it was not doubtful to the friends of Water-Cure,

nity ; and these weighed a great deal with us, and made us hesitate ; and the more so, because we knew no Water Cure physician equal to him in most of the acquirements essential to the treatment of the diseases of mankind. We, therefore, consulted with him, and found him firm in the faith of calomel, and in the purpose to give it, should he take our lovely boy in charge ; and so we at once decided to send to Boston for Mr. Joseph A. Whitmarsh, an old acquaintance of mine, and who was then engaged, to a considerable extent, in the practice of Hydropathy. He accordingly came, and staid with us over the night, working almost constantly upon the child, with his various water applications ; and much to our astonishment and our joy, and to the astonishment of Dr. Wilmarth and others, the disease was very much subdued by morning, and convalescence soon followed, and then an entire restoration to health ! This is the case of which Dr. Wilmarth speaks in his Address before " The American Hygienic and Hydropathic Association of Physicians," &c., which may be found in another part of this Memoir. In justice, however, to Dr. Wilmarth, I ought here to say, perhaps, that his kind and sympathizing advice to us, was, to act in the premises, just

as we should wish we had acted, should the child be taken from us.

But that was a year of much sickness at Hopedale ; and Mr. Whitmarsh's success in our little "Willie's" case, encouraged others to send for him ; and in the course of the summer, he came frequently to several patients. And at each time, his treatment was successful. This fact, together with the earnest discussion upon the subject, which was constantly going on among us, set the Dr. seriously to thinking whether there might not, after all, be some sound philosophy in the new Theory ; and he resolved upon giving it a most thorough investigation ; and upon testing it, particularly by observation and experience. His wife says of him : "He was always hard to be convinced of anything new ; but when convinced, was ever ready to acknowledge it." And this we all saw to be specially the case at the time we are considering. With his naturally conservative mind, and his great firmness, with less conscience and less Christian principle than he possessed, he would, most likely, have resisted the light that shone upon his mind, to the day of his death—especially if all his worldly interests, as is the case with most physicians, had been against his changing his life-

it—and it will take a long talk to convince a judicious and experienced Physician of the dangerous effects of Catnip or Pennyroyal Tea, or even of Ipecac or Castor Oil, when properly administered—I am also willing to believe that many and remarkable cures have been, and will continue to be, effected, by the various applications of water, in the form of Plunge, Shower, Douche, and Hose Baths, as the remedial agent, combined with proper diet, air, exercise, rest, and total abstinence from all the predisposing and exciting causes of disease; and all who wish to avail themselves of these means of recovery, in an eminent degree, I can cheerfully recommend to repair to New Lebanon Springs forthwith. Here is an intelligent and conscientious Physician to direct, attentive and kind-hearted nurses, a very agreeable family to board with, an abundant supply of first rate water, every useful form of baths, and of every variety of temperature, the most beautiful mountain scenery, towering hills arrayed in green, and deep and fearful ravines where limpid streams contend, and seek their level on beds of rock, deeply furrowed by the course of time. \* \* \*

“In short, I have fully realized my expectations in finding this place exceedingly well calculated for breaking off pernicious habits, and learning correct views of living, in all things relating to the physical man, and, in a good degree, to the moral and spiritual man also.”

Soon after the above communication was published, I received from him the following letter, which was also published in the *Practical Christian*, and in which some indications of progress may be seen :

*“New Lebanon Springs, N. Y., June 9, 1847.*

“DEAR BR. FISH :—

“I presume you will be glad to know how I progress in the experience and observation of Hydropathy. As to experience, I can report somewhat favorably of its effects in my own case. I find myself in better health and spirits than when I commenced treatment eight weeks ago. Quite as much change has been effected in my symptoms as could reasonably be expected in so inveterate a case of several years' standing. Whether I shall continue to mend in the same ratio for eight weeks or eight months to come, remains to be seen. If that should be the case, I may become wholly converted to Hydropathy—at present I do not acknowledge myself but about five-eighths converted. As to my observation of its effects on others in this establishment, I have witnessed some excellent ones in several cases. In two cases of Erysipelas and one of sub-acute inflammation of the lungs, the effects were strikingly beneficial. There is something very comfortable in the reflection that henceforth the craving thirst may be allayed, and the fever-heated skin be cooled with the clear and life-reviving element, with-

where an honest man like him, and one so disinterested as to his reputation and pecuniary interests, would end. They were confident he would come out on the side of the New practice.

Soon after this period, the Dr. was himself quite out of health, and as he had but little faith in the application of Allopathic remedies in *his* peculiar case—a not uncommon thing, it is said, among physicians—the next summer (1847) he resolved upon trying the effects of Hydropathy upon his own person. Accordingly, he went to the Establishment of Mr. David Cambell, at New Lebanon Springs, N. Y., designing thoroughly to test the system, both by his own experience and by a careful and critical observation of its results in other cases. He did not go with very sanguine expectations, fancying he might find a sovereign remedy for all physical maladies; not in a state of mind to be made an *easy* convert. He was still doubtful, somewhat prejudiced, and not a little opposed to so much of pretension as he frequently saw manifested by Hydropathists. But he went with a mind open to conviction, determined to be candid and impartial in his investigations and inquiries, and finally to report his deliberate and honest convictions. He at once



received favorable impressions of Mr. and Mrs. Cambell, and also of Dr. Bedortha, the latter of whom he soon came to regard as one of the best of physicians, and a very excellent man and Christian. But he did not, at first, make himself known to them as a Physician, thinking that remaining there *incog.*, would afford him a more favorable opportunity to make close and accurate observations, than he otherwise could enjoy.

After having been at New Lebanon a few weeks, the following communication was received from Dr. Wilmarth, as a contribution to the columns of the Practical Christian, in which it appeared in May, 1847, and from which may be learned his first impressions :

“ For The Practical Christian.

“ MR. EDITOR :—I am now under the Water-Cure treatment at the New Lebanon Water-Cure Establishment, Columbia Co., N. Y.—D. Cambell & Son, Proprietors ; N. Bedortha, M. D., Physician. I have not experienced or observed enough yet, to sit in judgment on this exclusive mode of treating ‘ all the ills to which flesh is heir.’ Still, believing there are many cases where water would effect a cure much more expeditiously, and with equal safety, if it had some well-known and long-tried medicinal articles in

Adam in the most favorable condition to 'be healed.'  
All hail the day!

"B. WILMARTH."

The following letter to me, from Mr. Cambell, confirms the general impression which I have endeavored to give of Dr. Wilmarth, both as a Physician and a Christian man:

*"New Lebanon Springs, July 20, 1853.*

"MR. FISH:

*Dear Sir:—*As soon as the appalling news reached me that Dr. Wilmarth was among the victims of the awful catastrophe at Norwalk, Ct., I felt an inclination to re-peruse several of his letters, which I had on file, and which go to illustrate the peculiarities of his character. These letters I forward to you, agreeably to your public request in the 'Practical Christian.'

"My first acquaintance with Dr. Wilmarth, was in the Spring of 1847, as a *patient* in the Water-Cure Establishment here, then under the medical charge of N. Bedortha, M. D. At first, he did not make himself known as a Physician of long practice and much experience; but his amiable qualities and truly Christian sentiments were very soon "known and read" of all the other patients and inmates of the Establishment." On leaving the Water-Cure, the following was found written in the public Register, which serves to illustrate his views and feelings;

and I can testify that they were universally reciprocated :

“ ‘June 15, 1847. Left this excellent Institution somewhat improved in health and spirits, and on terms of cordial friendship, with the Physician, Proprietors, and their respective families, nurses and attendants, the guests and all that pertain to the house ; with additional light on Physiology, Pathology and Therapeutics ; and with increasing faith in the Water-Cure, as well as a sincere wish for the best of blessings, to rest upon this Institution and all that now pertain thereunto, or that may hereafter resort here to regain their health ; believing that no other Establishment of the kind in the country affords superior, if, indeed, equal advantages.

“ ‘ B. WILMARTH, M. D.’

“ In the Spring of 1852, Dr. Wilmarth became the Physician of the Establishment, and left it at the closing of the season, having formed the plan of establishing a Water-Cure of his own, in company with Dr. Hero, at Westboro', Mass. I wish to add, that while Physician here, he was as much loved and respected in the capacity of *Physician* as when *Patient* in the same institution. He was also loved and respected in the community ; was chosen as Superintendent of the Sabbath School, and called into several of the neighboring towns as Physician in some very critical cases. The news of his sad death

out the fear of harm, if judiciously applied. Some few have long known this fact ; but many have feared, who may now take courage,—the experiment has been well tried.

“ I came here with a hope to be benefited, and with a determination to examine carefully and report honestly. And the result of my short and imperfect investigations, thus far, when summed up into opinions and articles of faith, is as follows :

“ 1. The discoveries of Vincent Priessnitz, in the various modes of applying water for the removal of disease are of immense importance, and will prove a lasting blessing to mankind.

“ 2. The opposition manifested to the ‘ Water-Cure’ by the Medical faculty and their adherents, will prove wholly unavailing, since there is *truth* in it that will demonstrate itself by washing away from the ‘ Materia Medica’ of the future a herculean host of deleterious mineral and earthy substances, that have already filled up their measure of evil to the human race.

“ 3. That the more zealous advocates of Hydropathy claim far too much for this ‘ new remedy,’ and if not timely aware, will venture beyond their depth to the great discredit of their system and danger to their patients, inasmuch as man is manifestly not an aquatic animal, and had therefore better conform to his nature and station than attempt to go beyond their appointed limits.

" 4. That a long list of diseases *need* no other remedial agent than water, combined with proper diet and regimen, is capable of ocular demonstration, as well as that *some* are seriously injured by any attempt at drug medication.

" 5. Another class of diseases *may* be cured by water, but would be abbreviated by well-known simple medicines.

" 6. The medical power of nature is the great restorer of health ; and all that physicians, water or medicine can do, is to place the patient in the most favorable condition for this grand agent to exert itself to the best advantage.

" 7. About ~~five~~ <sup>five</sup>-eighths of all remedial measures consist in removing the causes of disease, correcting and regulating habits, proper diet, pure air, mental repose, exercise and rest, cheerful company and pleasant scenery. The remaining three-eighths may be made up with water or medicine, as the case requires.

" 8. Hydropathic institutions, under good moral and physical regulations, are, above all other situations at the present day, the best resort for the sick, whether laboring under acute or chronic diseases.

" 9. As all things are ultimately to find their level, so water and medicine will, of course ; and by a friendly and harmonious union of the one with the gentler kinds of the other, exert their combined energies to place the afflicted sons and daughters of

at Norwalk fell upon this community with appalling effect.

“Yours in the best of bonds,

“DAVID CAMPBELL.”

Having remained at New Lebanon about two months, Dr. Wilmarth returned to Hopedale, considerably improved in health, and so much of a convert to Hydropathy, that he henceforth stood before the world in the position of a Water-Cure Physician—not heartily fellowshiped, however, by the Ultraists of any school. He had gone too far in Hydropathy for the regular M. Ds, and not far enough for those in whose system Water was the *only* remedy for disease—a panacea. True to his own conscience and judgment, and without regard to public opinion, he still remained an Eclectic. He only professed up to the exact point of his belief in the efficacy of Water; and that belief was of very gradual and slow growth. He even tenaciously adhered to the practice of administering some medicines—always the more simple ones—to the close of his earthly life; and it is probable that he would have continued to do so, had he remained with us many years more. He, however, relied more and more, as he advanced in age, upon the recuperative powers of Nature, and was

far more inclined to go forward to the "let alone system" of the celebrated Dr. Jennings, than to go backward to his old system of calomelizing, bleeding, etc. He believed that if we would strictly observe the laws of life and health, in our sickness, surrounding ourselves with cleanliness, quiet, and fresh air, simple Nature would do far more for us than the mass of the Drs. are doing for the sick. He believed that the Drs. killed many who would get well without them ; and had the most faith in those who used the least medicine—more, for this reason, in Homœopathy than in Allopathy. He once carried me through a severe and critical course of typhoid fever, and gave me of medicine only one dose of oil. Still, he gave too much medicine to the last, to suit some ; and they complained of him for not using water freely enough.

The following letter to his son, at that time absent from home, and just recovering from a brief sickness, will be appropriate here as an expression of his fear of Allopathic medicines :

*" New Græfenberg, N. Y., Aug. 28, 1851.*

"DEAR SON :—

"Yours of the 28th was duly received. We were very sorry you have been sick, and very glad you

have partially recovered. You must be exceedingly careful what you eat for two or three weeks, at least. I suspect you had eaten too much solid food, as well as fruit, on your visiting tour. The attack you experienced was one of Nature's efforts to rid herself of morbid matters. The proper treatment would have been to have taken a warm bath, 100 degs. Fahr., or a wet sheet packing, with hot bricks, or bottles of hot water about your body and feet, and cold wet cloths to the head. After equalizing the circulation by these means, (and repeating, if necessary,) short sitz baths, 10 or 15 min. each in water 60 or 65 degs. 3 or 4 times a day, with injections of pure cold water at 75 degs. after every discharge, with a wet compress, covered by a dry one over the bowels, small draughts of tepid or cold water, according to the thirst, would have been the proper, rational, and scientific course to have pursued, and to pursue in all such cases, and not one in fifty would die under such treatment. The nourishment in all such cases should be very simple and stinted. A teacupfull of thin, arrow-root, rice-water, toast-water, and such like farinaceous articles, three times a day, is abundantly sufficient in the acute stage. You must be careful about diet, or you will be down again in a few weeks.

As to Dr. ———'s 'preparation of chalk, and one or two other things,' I must condemn them. I knew them of old; they used to live in our family. They never were good servants, and always bad masters.



I am sorry he (Dr. ———,) don't know any better. I hope I may have an opportunity to see him and tell him a little of my experience in Dysentery, with the Water-Cure treatment. I think I am justly entitled to an opportunity to give my opinion on Calomel & Co., to the good people of ———, at some future day, which thing I will gladly do, if the Lord will, and they will give me the use of room and lights, and lend me their ears an hour or two on some pleasant evening. I rather claim this right as an act of justice, and the best 'amende' they can make for poisoning you with calomel. It is *rank poison* to you, and you will be fortunate if you escape unharmed from the effects of that *single* dose. It was that which weakened you so. You cannot bear physic, and ought not to take any thing more drastic than castor oil, or rhubarb. But in this sickness, you did not need it. If you had taken the Water-Cure course above described, it would have cured you quicker, and left no 'sting behind.' I know very well what Dr. ——— and his disciples will say: 'That the calomel brought away foul matter from the system,' &c. But what else did it do, Dr. ? Did it not determine the circulation to the bowels, which was already too much there ? Did it not irritate the delicate lining of the intestinal canal, which was already too much irritated ? Most certainly, both the above consequences followed. Why use it then, when the morbid matters can be sweated out

and rinsed out by simple, bland, unirritating, and 'most blessed water'? 'But the calomel excites the glandular system, and restores the secretions.' Ah! that indeed. It does excite them, and in a most terrific manner, too! Every glandular organ puts forth its utmost effort to expel and wash the poison out of the system, oftentimes at the expense of the loss of their normal action forever afterwards. This is the way irritating poisons act upon the system, and the system upon them. They are mortal enemies. It is of no use to defend Calomel before me. I have tried him and found him guilty. I have not a doubt but that much of the ill-health of the present generation is fairly attributable to the use of Calomel and other irritating poisons as medicines. The opium you took was less objectionable, under the circumstances, (though under water treatment you would not have needed it,) inasmuch as it tends to allay irritation and determine to the surface. But what a foolish and injurious game to play upon vital structures—to irritate and soothe, determine to the center, and then determine back again! About as consistent as it would be to freeze yourself for the sake of the pleasure of thawing out again. O, that men, especially physicians, had some faith in God, and the remedial power he has established in every vital organism! Ten thousand hands are on the watch to guard the citadel of life, and ready at a moment's warning to work for oppressed nature.

The vital energies of the organism are these hands ; they should not be manacled nor cut off by violent measures, nor be obliged to expend all their energies in expelling 'a little chalk and *one* or *two* other things.' I leave this subject for the present, feeling thankful you are so well as you are, and hoping by carefulness on your part and the Divine blessing you will recover your wonted health, speedily. I think if you are attacked again, with bowel complaint or any other disease, and cannot manage yourself or send for me quick enough, I should recommend you to employ a Homœopathic physician. I have much less fear of that treatment than of the Allopathic, because it leaves nature *free* to cure herself, if it does not help her a little.

“ B. WILMARTH.”

“ P. S. We would send our respects and thanks to the kind friends who assisted you during your sickness. Also, to the Dr., who, I doubt not, thought he was doing you good service. I respect all honest men, though I may condemn some of their practices. I most conscientiously gave Calomel once ; but know better now. B. W.”

## CHAPTER VI.

Commences the practice of Hydropathy at Hopedale—Goes to Lowell for a brief season—Returns and opens a Water-Cure Establishment at Hopedale—Small success—Moves to New Græfenberg. N. Y.—Lectures on Hydropathy in various places—Moves to New Lebanon—Enters into partnership with Dr. J. H. Hero, and in union they make a purchase at Westboro'—Leaves New Lebanon and visits Hopedale—Moves to Westboro'—A short sickness—Flattering prospects—Visits Hopedale—Goes to New York—Is brought home a corpse—Is conveyed to Hopedale—His funeral services and his burial.

Soon after returning home from New Lebanon, Dr. W. commenced practicing his profession, according to his new views, in Hopedale and vicinity; and was frequently called to the neighboring towns, and sometimes to more distant ones. Many patients also called upon him; and he soon made preparations in his own house for the reception and treatment of a few. In the Autumn of '48 he had an invitation to take charge of the Water-Cure Establishment at Lowell, during a brief absence of Dr.

Foster, who was its permanent Physician. Here he remained about two months, giving, I believe, much satisfaction to the proprietors and patients. On his return to Hopedale, or soon after, three of these patients followed him ; one of them remaining with him through the winter ; and as he also had two or three others, sometimes more, his house was about full, so that his care of them, together with his out-practice, occupied nearly all his time, and afforded him a sufficient income for his current expenses. In the following Spring, however, the Community fitted up quite a commodious two-story house for him, respectably furnishing it, and providing it with the necessary facilities for baths, hoping that it might prove to be a successful experiment, so that we should have him permanently in our midst. But for various reasons—most of them quite apparent to those acquainted with the facts—he did not receive the patronage which he, and we all, anticipated ; and it was rather a losing enterprise with him.

Dr. Wilmarth was not the man to make an ordinary location for such an Establishment, attractive to the world. He was too honest, too truthful, and not sufficiently skilled in the very common art of flourishing and puffing, to make invalids, who had money

to spare, think that *his* Institution was the most finely situated of any in the country, and he himself the most wonderful Physician. His *conscience* always stood in the way of such fashionable and fanciful *coloring*—not to use a harsher term—and he never could decide to turn a deaf ear to that faithful monitor within him. He must always state facts without any adorning, even though they were against his interests ; and frequently has he stood resolutely out against those connected with him, who insisted upon his sounding his trumpet louder—as loud, at least, as his competitors ; and so loud that all interested, who had well-filled purses, might hear. But no—not one point beyond the truth would he go, patients or no patients. At Hopedale he was sustained in this ; and I doubt not that it was one of the reasons why he did not receive more patronage.

The most that he would say in his Proposal was :  
“ It is proposed to erect a plain and convenient house, with all necessary fixtures for bathing, &c., attached thereto, having strict regard to economy and health, so that the means of enjoying its benefits may be brought within the reach of persons in moderate circumstances, as well as of the wealthy, who alone, as yet, have been able to avail themselves of

the Water-Cure a sufficient length of time to effect a recovery. A respectable location presents itself, where a handsome prospect may be had of surrounding scenery. \* \* A more quiet and peaceful retreat can scarcely be found in this, or any, country."

Of course a plain notice like this, would fail to astonish the world, and fail, therefore, to attract much serious attention. There was not pretense, not "gas" enough about it, and it did not promise enough of show and excitement, to satisfy the lovers of the marvelous and the wonder-working; and so they looked in other directions where luxury and health could *both* be found! Thus it is, too, that simplicity and honesty, often have to yield the palm to ostentation and humbuggery.

But about six months after Dr. Wilmarth had opened his Establishment at Hopedale, he had an invitation from Dr. Holland, the Proprietor of the New Græfenberg Water-Cure Establishment, to take the position of Physician to that Institution, which invitation he seriously considered, and finally accepted. But it was with extreme reluctance that he took this step. He had joined the Community, and taken up his residence in it, hoping that it would be

his permanent home ; and he did not entertain a doubt, when he first did so, that such would be the case. It was the order of society toward which he had longingly and prayerfully looked, for many years ; and he had entered into it with enthusiasm and joy, confident in the expectation of a sufficient degree of success and prosperity to make him contented and happy for the remainder of his days. He did not anticipate, nor demand, the superfluities nor the luxuries of life ; but desired necessary conveniences and comforts, without excessive toil and care to procure them. He had been hard at work through nearly all his previous years, and had so broken down under his labors, that he felt an absolute need of an increase of quiet and rest—especially as the natural infirmities of age admonished him that he could endure, as he had done, but little longer. But the Community had not become large enough, nor wealthy enough, to afford him such a support as his circumstances required ; and not being able to ride extensively and at all seasons, and in all kinds of weather, he found it exceedingly difficult to do anything more than simply to meet his necessary expenses ; whilst he thought he ought, at his time of life, to be annually adding something to



his little property, as a provision for old age, should he live, or for his family, should he die. He had hitherto been too unmindful of the future—as he himself began to realize—sacrificing his worldly interests to his benevolence, which he could no longer prudently do.

These were the principal reasons which influenced him to accept the invitation of Dr. Holland, above referred to ; though he also thought, that in such an Institution, with patients enough to afford him a sufficient amount of business, he could be more useful than in any other position in life. To be at the head of some kind of an Infirmary for invalids, was even the dream of his early years ; and he had long looked forward to the realization of it, in his latter days, with much hope. The Community did, indeed, make him a liberal offer, according to its means, to remain, and carry out his views in this direction, at Hopedale ; but he was exceedingly reluctant for that to become responsible for any loss that might accrue, and he thought that by going away a few years, he might accumulate sufficient means to return and accomplish his object with less assistance, and pretty much at his own risk. Accordingly, in the Spring of 1851, he went to New

Græfenberg, taking his family with him, and immediately entered upon the duties of his new situation. But here also he was destined to something of disappointment. The Establishment was not patronized as he supposed it would be, and the pecuniary advantage which he found himself deriving from his connexion with it, was quite too small to compensate him for his removal and his time. He, however, at times, had some fifteen or twenty patients to prescribe for, and otherwise attend to, and frequently went into the surrounding region—and occasionally a long distance—to deliver lectures upon Hydropathy, which kept him well occupied, and satisfied that he was, at least, not living in vain, but doing some good. In a letter to Dr. Hero, dated New Græfenberg, July 15, 1851, he says:—

“ I have been ‘ fishing ’ a few times of late. At Oriskany Falls, at Madison Village, at Frankfort, and Leonardsville, I have thrown out my bait in the form of Lectures on Hydropathy, and kindred subjects. I am determined the people shall hear of something besides Calomel and Antimony to heal their diseases—that is, if the Lord spares my life and health. It is our true policy, as well as our duty, to enlighten the public mind upon the laws of

health and disease, and remedial agents in sickness. The Drs. come out to hear me, but don't move their tongues. They *know* I speak the truth—or, if they don't, I do. I mean to treat *them* courteously, though I do not mean to treat some of their *poisons* very courteously.

“ I have been invited to take a tour of more than a hundred miles, and lecture at the Villages on the way. I may go when the evenings get a little longer and cooler. They want my services ‘*gratis*,’ of course ; and that I should not mind, if I could make converts and get patients—such patients as I could *benefit*—otherwise I can ill afford it. We are picking up some—have fifteen patients now, and expect three more this week. I think the stirring up of the waters, now and then, is the way to proceed. First, make a tremendous splashing with a long pole, to attract attention ; then be still, and throw out your line and hook, being sure you have it well covered with *bait*. But you must manœuver differently for the different species, or you will catch nothing but a bull-pout, when you expected a pickerel. The most troublesome species, however, are the ‘*shiners*,’ always nibbling, but having neither throats nor

months large enough to swallow gnats or musquitoes.

“ But seriously, as to this *managing* business, I despise it. If plain, honest, kind words and treatment will not suffice to enlighten the mind and direct invalids to the right method of cure, they must die, for all that I can, or will do. I cannot humbug, nor tease, nor palaver, even to obtain a chance to cure a patient ;—no ; I must work openly and honestly, or not at all. We have some great guns out this way, doing a marvelous business ; but their *modus operandi* is kept a profound secret from the vulgar crowd !

“ When I went to Oriskany and Madisonville, I forgot to take my lecture ; so I sat down and wrote a few ‘ heads of discourse,’ and got along so well, that the next night I did not so much as have any notes, but let the matter run free, right from the fountain ; and I never held an audience so still before. The minister and doctor were present ; and the doctor invited me to come again.”

But as he did not succeed in proportion to his anticipations and hopes at New Græfenberg, having made satisfactory arrangements with Dr. Holland, he concluded to leave before the year was out for

which he was engaged ; and accordingly did so, after remaining there about eleven months. But another situation of the same kind being offered to him, by his highly-esteemed friend, Mr. David Cambell, of the New Lebanon Springs Water-Cure Establishment, he accepted that ; and after having taken a month or two for rest and visiting, a part of which time he spent at Hopedale, he proceeded directly to that beautiful place, and entered, with much hope, into the situation that awaited him. But his ambition, and his settled purpose, was, to have an Establishment of his own ; and as he did not find even New Lebanon patronized to a sufficient extent to afford him an adequate income, he at once decided to secure, if possible, the situation at Westboro', which he occupied at his death. In this project, Dr. J. H. Hero, then of Athol, a young, enterprising, and growing Homœopathic and Hydropathic Physician, was connected with him, from its very inception, and they purchased together, in the month of July, 1852, and entered into an equal copartnership in their professional business.

This union was one that was mutually agreeable and satisfactory, and that promised to be mutually advantageous. Dr. Wilmarth had great confidence

in Dr. Hero's qualifications as a Physician, and great confidence in him as a man of integrity and uprightness of character, and elevated moral principle ; and, on the other hand, Dr. Hero regarded Dr. Wilmarth with the profoundest respect, considering him before almost any other man in this general region, as a Physician ; and scarcely second to any one, for the various manly, humane, and Christian virtues and excellences. The union between them, *professionally*, was that of a generous Preceptor and grateful student ; and *socially*, that of an elder and a younger brother. The one was peculiarly qualified, by his knowledge, skill, and great experience, for the direction of home-practice, and for the charge of all critical cases ; whilst the other, by his youth, activity and popular address, together with quite as much skill as is common with young physicians, was peculiarly qualified for practice abroad. No two could easily be found so well adapted to each other, and so suited to render each other service. And they both confidently anticipated much success and happiness together.

Having entered into this partnership, and purchased the place they had long had their eye upon and desired, Dr. Wilmarth left New Lebanon in Oct.,

1852—having been there only about six months—and after spending a few weeks at Hopedale, went directly to Westboro', to prepare for the opening of their Establishment; whilst Dr. Hero went to Syracuse, N. Y., to attend a course of Medical Lectures. As soon as it was known that Dr. W. had taken possession of his new location, he began to have frequent calls for his professional services, and at once found himself engrossed with business. But, unfortunately, he was shortly after taken sick, and confined to his bed and his room, for several weeks; which, of course, cut him abruptly off from the practice he had commenced so auspiciously. He had a regular run of typhoid fever, and it was doubtful, for a time, what the result would be. By his request, I went up to see him, partly in order to assist him in adjusting his affairs as he desired to leave them should he be taken away; and partly to stop with him for a while as company, and to take what care of him, and minister to such of his wants, as I could. I found him, however, somewhat better, and gradually recovering, with a fair prospect of soon being about his avocation again. But he seemed exceedingly glad to see me, and I was certainly as glad of the opportunity to see him, and to render him such

fraternal service as I conveniently could. Being so much improved, he could engage in conversation without serious injury ; and we, therefore, freely talked over many matters of mutual interest to us.

And now that he has gone from our midst, I look back to that visit with peculiar satisfaction, grateful that it was my privilege to make it. The simple memory of it, is of great value to me ; and I shall ever cherish it with a melancholy pleasure. A sunny spot it is, in my world-pilgrimage, sad though the retrospection is.

I saw, during the short time I spent with the Dr.—only about a day and a half—that already there were neighbors around him, who were much attached to him, and greatly interested respecting his sickness. Some called, anxious to know when he would be well enough to visit their sick friends ; some to get prescriptions for themselves, and some to inquire after him, and to proffer their services, should their services be needed. And when he sufficiently recovered his health to get about much, he had as many calls for professional visits, as he could conveniently attend to. Dr. Hero, however, joined him in a few weeks, and very much lightened his bur-

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dens ; though there was a very satisfactory amount of employment for both of them—enough greatly to encourage them as to their future prospects. They not only had calls at 'Westboro', but also from several adjoining towns ; and many, tired of the old medical practice, and favorably inclined to Hydropathy, were congratulating themselves that they were henceforth to have the presence of two such Physicians, so near and accessible to them.

Dr. Wilmarth was so acute and accurate in his understanding and delineation of disease, having for almost thirty years been one of the closest living observers of it, in its various forms and phases—and so well knew what medicines could not do any good, and would, in certain cases, do great injury ; and was, withal, so frank in expressing his opinion, whether for or against his pecuniary interest, and so honest and reliable as a Christian and a man, and Dr. Hero was so much in sympathy and union with him, that many seemed to feel an increased security against premature death by proximity to their new Establishment—just as had been the case with not a few at Hopedale, and in the vicinity, whilst Dr. W. was with us. They had both been often called to Southboro' and Marlboro'—two towns adjoining West-

boro', in which the Water-Cure had taken a strong hold—and they were, therefore, well known. Dr. Wilmarth had also been to Northboro' frequently, and occasionally into other towns near. The expectations which many cherished, were not, therefore, without foundation, and the result of ignorance, as in the case of much of the medical quackery so prevalent in our time. They had good reason to think that some, at least, would find a "Bethesda," in the baths of Westonville. Very great, therefore, and sad was their disappointment, at the sudden and melancholy departure of the Senior Dr. from the world! His great experience and skill, together with his perfect honesty and genuine humanity, had inspired many an invalid, and their anxious friends, with much of hope, who now became despondent. They knew no living physician, in whose wisdom and integrity they could so implicitly trust. Their loss, therefore—how great!

But Dr. Hero, I would here say, still continues at Westonville, and is making preparations for the reception of a large number of patients. Already he has received some, and his out-practice is increasing, and he becoming deservedly popular. Whoever patronizes him, will find him a good Physician,

and an excellent and a reliable man. He has also received into partnership with him Dwight Russell, M. D., late Professor of Theory and Practice, in the Medical College of Syracuse, N. Y., who has the reputation of being a skillful "eclectic" Physician of many years' practice.

Thus much I have deemed it appropriate to say, in passing, of Dr. Hero, on account of his intimate connexion with Dr. Wilmarth, and their mutual interest in each other. In life they were one, and in death they would not be divided.

But to return to Dr. Wilmarth.—Being relieved from an excess of cares and duties, by the presence and aid of Dr. Hero, he found time, a few weeks previous to his death, to make two or three hasty and short calls at Hopedale, though they were mostly of a business character. At one of his visits, he desired my assistance, in a certain financial matter, which required us to ride several miles together in a private carriage. This was in the month of April; and he was in fair health for him, in fine spirits, and seemed cheerful and enthusiastic as to his future prospects. We were traveling in company most of the day, and therefore enjoyed a very favorable opportunity for conversation upon a variety of sub-

jects, both old and new, which were of special interest to us. A hallowed day, too, is that in my memory, it being the last one that it was our privilege to spend together.

On our way, we called at Blackstone, on the Dr.'s intimate and valued friend, Prof. Wm. S. Brown; and as they had not seen each other for a considerable length of time, the greeting on both sides was most hearty, earnest and joyous, little thinking it was their last earthly interview! Mr. Brown, as he shall read this, will undoubtedly recollect the time and the pleasant meeting, with mingled pleasure and grief. The Dr. also made some new acquaintances, to whom I introduced him, and who talked of moving to Westboro'; and they separated, mutually much gratified with the short visit, and in anticipation of a period, not far distant, perhaps, when they would probably be near neighbors and intimate friends. But how, in one single moment, did this anticipation perish! The reminiscence alone remains, with the surviving—an impressive illustration of the truth, that we "know not what a day, or an hour, may bring forth."

The remaining portion of the good Dr.'s life may be briefly told—alas! too briefly.

On Tuesday, the 2d day of May, he left his home and family at Westboro', Mass., to attend "The Annual Meeting of the American Hygienic and Hydropathic Association of Physicians and Surgeons," of which Body he was the honored President, having been chosen to that office two years before. He went reluctantly on several accounts—more particularly on account of the inconvenience of leaving his professional business, and the great, almost *premonitory*, repugnance, he had to railroad and steamboat travel. But his peculiar and responsible relation to the Association, and his deep interest in the general cause which that Association represents, prevailed with him over all personal preferences and considerations, and simply from a sense of duty, he decided to go, and accordingly took his departure. On the day, or the day after, he was expected to return, though not *very* confidently, came the news of the terrible catastrophe at the fatal Norwalk Bridge.

The fears of his family, and of some of his friends, were now painfully awakened for his safety. But he had talked of visiting the new Community at Raritan Bay, N. J., some of the prominent members of which were among his most intimate

and valued friends ; and it was *hoped*, by his wife, and by others who knew his strong inclination to make such a visit, that he was there. I myself felt quite certain that he was, especially as his name was not on the list of passengers, either living or dead ; and, in my heart, I blessed “ The Baritan Bay Union ” for *being*, thinking that alone must have saved him. His son, who was residing at Hopetdale, shared this feeling with me, as did most, if not all, of our Community members. But his home affairs so urgently demanded his presence and attention, that he could not indulge himself in the pleasure he desired, and which we trusted he had secured. He took the ill-fated train, and, all unconsciously, with nearly fifty others, not a few of his own profession, was hurried onward, at almost lightning speed, to an untimely and most tragical end—a sacrifice to the haste and criminal unconcern for human life, characteristic of the age and country in which he lived. It was a gloomy and sad day—alas ! to how many a domestic and social circle ! We turn from its contemplation with an inexpressible grief and sorrow. But most painfully memorable will it be to not a few bereaved and deeply afflicted ones, who will often weep over its tragic scenes for many a year to come, finding it

difficult to be reconciled to the burial of so many of their chief joys and hopes. May that God "who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," comfort them all and inspire them with the assurance of an ultimate reunion with the loved and the lost in higher spheres of being !

But Dr. Wilmarth was not recognized until two days after his death, no one being in company with him, and he having, it would seem, no papers in his pockets, from which his name or residence could be learned. On a common spectacle case which he had with him, the initials of his name, "B. W.," and "Hopedale," were marked, but so effaced by the water, that they were construed into "Opedenk," and got thus into the newspapers. - In his Valise he had articles by which he would have been easily known, but that was lost. Dr. O. S. Wellington, however, at whose house Dr. Wilmarth lodged, the night previous to his leaving New York, had his fears awakened, as soon as he received the intelligence of the catastrophe, that his friend and guest might be one of the victims, and immediately telegraphed to Norwalk, describing him, in order to ascertain whether such a person had been found. On receiving an affirmative reply, he at once proceeded

to the fatal spot, identified him, and started directly for Westboro' with his remains, where he arrived on Monday afternoon—the fourth day after the accident. And thus were the doubts and fears of Mrs. Wilmarth and her children at once dispelled; but O, *how* dispelled! It was now *certain* that her devoted and beloved husband, their affectionate and dear father, had left their presence forever—at least in a visible form. Their agony of suspense was changed to the agony of bereavement. But they wept wholly for themselves, not for him. They knew that he, if any one, was prepared to go, and that their loss would be his gain. Yet too great, of course, was their grief and sorrow to put into words. I will not attempt the task. “Expressive silence” must perform it.

But they, I would here say, feel under very special obligation to Dr. Wellington, for the deep and practical interest and sympathy he manifested on the occasion; and, in their behalf, I would make this public record of their grateful appreciation of his services. His humanity and his friendship will be held in durable remembrance by them, as it also will by many of the intimate and particular friends of the departed.



On the evening that the certain intelligence reached Hopedale that Dr. Wilmarth was dead, it circulated through the Community with almost telegraphic rapidity, and sadness and sorrow were universal among us. A large circle of friends immediately came together to express to each other their common grief, and to make preparations for sending to the afflicted wife and children our sympathy and aid, and for the bringing of the body into our midst for burial. Early on the following morning, therefore, a respectable delegation of our number, repaired to Westboro', in conformity to the general feeling and desire, and returned in the afternoon, with the corpse, accompanied by the bereaved family, and several of their neighbors and friends. Owing to the shortness of the notice, no special preparation could be made for funeral services, and no regular Discourse was delivered. Adin Ballou made appropriate and impressive remarks, and was followed by Geo. W. Stacy of Milford, and C. B. Campbell, then a patient of Dr. Wilmarth's at Westboro'. The gathering was larger than could be accommodated in our small Chapel, and it was much regretted that time and circumstances did not admit of our having the services in a more commodious house. At Milford, a

mile and a half distant from us, any one of the Churches would have been freely opened for the occasion, so much respected was the good Dr., and a very large audience would have been convened. But this was not practicable, and, therefore, only a comparatively small number of his wide circle of friends and acquaintances, who would have been glad to attend his funeral, were present. Yet was it an impressive and profitable meeting—solemn and sad, though consolatory and hopeful.

The services concluded at the Chapel, the remains were carried to the retired and peaceful Cemetery of our Community, and there a simple marble slab, in harmony with his own pure simplicity, will hereafter mark the spot where reposes all that was mortal of an upright Man, a true Christian and skillful Physician, who was a “good Samaritan” both to the bodies and souls of many of his fellow beings.

“Loved sleeper, fare thee well!

We will not wish thee back, but lift the prayer

In fervency, that we may meet thee there,

Where thou hast gone to dwell,—

The prayer, that with us, as with thee, the even

Of life may be the entrance home of heaven.”

## CHAPTER VII.

Additional remarks on his character, particularly as a Christian Physician.

THERE are probably some that knew Dr. Wilmarth imperfectly, who will dissent from the highly eulogistic manner in which he has been spoken of throughout this Memoir. This may be also said, perhaps, of every person's memoir, written under the impressions and guidance of a warm personal friendship. But some, strangers particularly, thought the Dr. abrupt, blunt, and rather severe in his censures of some very common faults, which he might discover in them, or in their customs. I have known this to be the case with him, and I can easily understand how such of this class as never became much acquainted with him, and saw only this repellant phase of his character, failed to have any drawing towards him. He was certainly not always attractive and pleasing in his first addresses to those whom he might think proud, or fastidious, or unchristian in

his habits and practices. He would be very likely to give utterance to the thoughts that rose to the surface of his mind, and not always in so considerate and seemingly kind a manner as he should. Some have lately mentioned this failing of his to me, and told me that their first impressions of him were very unfavorable, though, at his death, they were among his truest and firmest friends.

Having, then, some more materials in my possession than I have yet used, I have decided to append an additional chapter of remarks on the character of the deceased—particularly as *the good Physician*.

As I have elsewhere remarked, Dr. Wilmarth needed to be intimately and well known to be appreciated. His friend Dr. Rice says of him: "Of an irritable temperament, when overcome and fatigued with business and care, a degree of peevishness sometimes showed itself; but it was only momentary, and soon broke forth into smiles, affection and sunshine." And the truth of this remark all his friends will recognize; and they will not care to have the fact suppressed. I am sure he himself would not.

But his friend Field, quite a *serious* minded man, looking at the Dr. from another point, expresses the

opinion that his chief faults grew out of his "too large mirthfulness, and an over-sensitiveness to real or intended wrong to him." And he was certainly too apt to look on "the dark side of things," and to be despondent and rather complaining. Yet even this fault was the shadow of a great excellence—sometimes, at least. He was benevolent and kind himself, delighting to do good and to confer favors upon all; and when he saw the prevalence of a narrow, unaccommodating selfishness, his hope for humanity was dimmed for a time, and he gave himself too much to lamentation and censure. He bemoaned the depravity of mankind, and often deeply sighed for

"A lodge in some vast wilderness."

Let all, therefore, who knew him, remember his failings, as well as his virtues; and remember them, if they must, to the diminution of the respect which they would otherwise cherish for him. I would not certainly take any special pains to *conceal* his failings; though I would only labor to bring out his virtues. I knew him well—each side of his character, private and public—and I know that the good and the bright side was the predominant one, and the true representative of the man; the other, only

the incidental and transient. There was no confirmed, persistent evil within him ; most clearly, none that would meditate, or compass, the injury of a single human being—even his worst enemy.

Mr. Field knew him almost as intimately as one man can know another, for seventeen or eighteen years ; and he says respecting him : “ In his *dealings* with mankind, I do not believe that one single fault could be found. I never saw one myself ; and I never heard of one.” Of how very few men can this be said !—and yet it is said by a man, himself among the most candid, most truthful, and, so far as character is concerned, the most scrutinizing of men. “ I know his life to have been,” he continues, “ since I first knew him, made up of good deeds ;—deeds of kindness to the poor, the sick, the fallen, the afflicted. And the public generally had a high regard for him, as a Man, a Christian, and a Physician. The Medical Faculty, in this region, [Leverett] looked upon him as one of the first of his profession. Still, there was always a class that could never appreciate him.”

Dr. Wilmarth was, perhaps, the least understood, and the least appreciated, by the wealthy and the fashionable. The poor who became acquainted with

him, seldom, if ever, I think, misjudged him. Though sometimes abrupt, perhaps a little rude, in his intercourse with them—especially in his rebukes of what he saw wrong in their midst—they nevertheless knew that within him there beat a warm and fraternal heart, and that he was their *friend*. He moved among them, not as a superior being, but as a brother, whose interests he was bound by the law of divine love to look after. I believe no poor person whom he ever ministered unto has any other view of him.

There are some of the poor in the surroundings of Hopedale—even among the Irish—whose warm and grateful hearts could proffer most earnest and emphatic testimony to this point. Would that they could give expression to their ardent feelings through the medium of the pen, as I have heard them give expression to those feelings in verbal speech!—since his death, in deep, heartfelt lamentations and sorrow thereat! This would be the best eulogy upon his Christian benevolence that could possibly be pronounced.

His friend Field, speaking to this point, said of him:—"There was one peculiar and worthy trait in his character, that I never saw, to the same extent, in any one else, and which I hardly expect to see again, while I may live in the body: It was his

familiarity with all classes ; rich or poor, high or low, black or white, bond or free. No one was beneath his notice ; and some who move in fashionable life thought less highly of him on this account." This is certainly a very valuable testimony—more honorable to his memory than any eminence of station could bestow.—“ Professional dignity”—that *proud* dignity of *rank*, which is often seen among physicians, as among some other classes—artificial, cold, formal, heartless, statue-like—how little and low is *that* in comparison with the humane and Christ-like spirit that ever bends in blandness and benevolence to bless the unfortunate poor ! It was the testimony of the lowliest, and yet the loftiest of the sons of earth—the Son of God—that “ many things highly esteemed among men are an abomination in the sight of the Lord ;” and one of those many things must be haughtiness of spirit and mien—contempt of poverty and misfortune.

But Dr. Wilmarth was not only benevolent in his *expressions* to the poor, and in rendering them medical service, but his benevolence also prompted him to take a real and deep interest in all their affairs, temporal and spiritual. He did not leave his prescriptions with them, give his advice, and hasten.

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away from their humble and scanty abodes, for more congenial and refined associates and surroundings. Few had the love of order or the love of beauty larger than he ; and no one ever prized more highly, intercourse with the cultivated and the excellent. But it was not in him to live for self-gratification alone, even in this respect. He knew that he could do good among the indigent, and so he spent no little of his time with them, to this end. He would inquire into their history, their means of living, their prospects, and encourage them to an industrious, virtuous and Christian life. He was interested in them as human beings, as God's children, as heirs of immortality ; and he rejoiced with them and wept with them, as their condition and circumstances made either joy or weeping a Christian sentiment and duty.

Though he was poor—comparatively so—the poor man blesses his memory for the treasures of his mind and heart which he so profusely scattered abroad. Many will long remember his cordial and friendly greetings, his fraternal inquiries, his parting wishes and benedictions, and find their hearts swelling with emotions of grief, and their eyes filling with tears, that they are to see his form and hear his friendly voice no more—that they have lost so much !

Would that his mantle might fall upon some worthy successor and be as worthily worn—upon many such successors !

As a Physician, Dr. Wilmarth's Christian benevolence was constantly manifesting itself in various ways. In the first place, in combination with his conscience, it constrained him to be moderate in his professional charges. This was, indeed, sometimes made a ground of complaint against him by other physicians—with some reason, perhaps. Yet it was no mere expedient of his to secure popularity and patronage, but a principle ; consequently, he continued to adhere to it, in a great degree, through life. He had an instinctive repulsion to what is sometimes vulgarly called, the " gouge game system," in the various transactions between man and man—the system of getting out of each other all that the law and popular custom will allow—and he repudiated it in action as well as in word. He was fixed in his purpose not to get rich by taking advantage of others' necessities ; and he never could have enjoyed wealth so accumulated. He was governed far more by what he thought his services worth, estimated by a *medium standard*, and by the pecuniary ability of the common people, than by what he might get for

them, and still be thought an honorable Physician.

He also lost hundreds of dollars due him for professional services, solely in consequence of his great reluctance to take anything from others, which they needed more than he, even though he had the legal right to do so. Many a poor man he never thought of calling upon for pay, and often refused it when proffered to him. He was governed, in such cases, far more by generosity than by justice, and longed for a state of society of which the former should be the law.

It must be confessed, however, that before his death he began to think that he had been not only "too benevolent for his own interest," as his friends always told him he was, but sometimes benevolent to no good end. Could he have seen others—the prosperous and rich especially—imitating his example, this would have been a sufficient reward, for whatever it might have cost him to set them that example; but in his dealings with them, he often found them still acting from the most narrow and selfish spirit. Some whom he had charged very moderate fees for his professional services in their families, exacted of him the most exorbitant prices for anything he might have occasion to purchase of them. He was not,

indeed, the man to parley and remonstrate with these sharpers ; but he would silently submit to their demands ; far more sad for them, and for the world over which selfishness has such extensive dominion, than for himself. His friend Field's testimony is :—  
“ If there were any misunderstanding between himself and others about dollars and cents, he would surrender his own right rather than to contend about the matter.”

Some men who have begun life with the benevolence of Dr. Wilmarth, have ended it with the selfishness of the miser—thinking themselves driven to this by necessity and in self-defense. He, however, was too confirmed a Christian, and had too much faith in the ultimate triumph of Love over all, to be thus influenced. He nevertheless felt that he could not afford to be so benevolent, in the latter period of his life as in the former. This was one of his *great* regrets and sorrows—and it made him occasionally desponding and almost weary of living. He had a very strong desire to be “ above board ” in worldly matters, that he might be charitable and generous, and able to give to the needy. He disliked exceedingly to *sell* any small thing that his neighbors needed—and to the poor especially. No man in this

world, I believe, more enjoyed the luxury of doing good. In his inmost heart he felt it to be "more blessed to give than to receive." He had always been accustomed to it; had, also, taken great pleasure in accommodating friends and neighbors with the loan of any thing belonging to him that they might need. In all kindly acts he found his reward; loving to do whatever favors he could, for those around him, for their sake and not for his profit. Any thing small and mean, in neighborhood intercourse, his soul loathed. ❧

But the following letter from him to Mr. David Cambell, of New Lebanon Springs, illustrates the fact that he felt himself, at last, fairly driven to look more closely after his pecuniary affairs, and to be more exacting of his employers :

"MR. CAMBELL :—

"*Dear Friend*: Suppose I should entertain the idea of taking charge of your Establishment, the year to come—on what conditions do you wish to employ me ? \* \* This is making *money* matters rather prominent; but I am heartily sick of the cant of talking about 'being useful,' of 'laboring for humanity,' and all that sort of thing, when self-interest alone is under the cloak. So I will take off the 'cloak,' and 'own up' that if you could open

a wider field of labor to us, and give us more pay than we have here, we should entertain your proposition sufficiently to look over the whole subject candidly. My greatest objection to making Hopedale my home at present, is, that I shall be obliged to ride more there than I wish to ride, and somewhat by night, to find my patients. I should have to keep a small Water-Cure, and ride 'from Dan to Beer-sheba' besides.

“The question, then, is: Can we reasonably hope for patronage enough to pay proprietors, doctors, matrons, cooks, bath men and women, chamber maids and waiters, all they will demand, and *oppress* nobody? I well remember a remark you made when I was a patient at your Establishment, viz: ‘that you had labored many years to heal the souls of your fellow-men, in vain, and now you were going to follow the example of Christ and try to heal their bodies, as well’—or something to that effect; and I was impressed that this was beginning ‘at the right end first.’ I mean to amplify upon the principle a little. We have ‘labored for humanity,’ in hope of mutual advantage, till our sun is on its decline, and we find ourselves still obliged to dig on or beg; and we have come to the conclusion, from the wants and sensations we experience, that we also belong to ‘hamanity,’ and that it is both our duty and privilege to provide for our own household. Hence the prominence of money-matters with us. I think that

we and our families have done our full share of 'un-compensated labor.' In future, I believe, we shall be justified in laboring for ourselves, in 'planting vineyards and eating the fruit thereof'—should we live to do so. If Providence should so direct that we labor together, I doubt not it would be pleasant; but let us look out and be *paid* for it.

"Yours for truth and righteousness,

"B. WILMARTH."

Now, that society is so permeated with the spirit of selfishness as to force a life-long philanthropic and good man to restrain his liberal and generous impulses, in his declining years, so that he shall not himself come to want, is a sad commentary upon the Christianity of New England in this nineteenth century! How limited have been its triumphs over selfishness—over the selfishness of even the boasting Church founded upon it.

But it must have been a very great satisfaction to the Dr., that though he found himself, at last, quite too limited in pecuniary matters, even for his convenience and ease, others had shared largely in the rewards of his labors. It was not for *self* that he had sacrificed the gratification of taste, and many privileges and pleasures that he might easily have secured, but that he might aid the needy. For their

sakes it was, that he kept himself poor—that he lived and died comparatively poor. The consciousness of this, must have been far more valuable to a mind like his, in advanced life, than the possession of wealth. He could only regret having been more considerate of the purses of the rich—more moderate in his demands upon them—than either his interests admitted of, or theirs required. It would often have been better for both parties, probably, if his charges had been higher—and yet, I suppose some occasionally thought them quite too high.

But he set a noble example, worthy of imitation, to a great extent, to that class of physicians who move among the poor and wretched with so much dignity, that they cannot stoop to sympathy and familiarity, and who often charge more for a single visit, than their patient can earn in a whole week. Some physicians are criminally exorbitant in their charges for attendance upon the poor—some professedly reformed physicians, and reformers, as well as some of the Old School—and they deserve exposure and rebuke.

Dr. Wilmarth was *the good Physician*, having another end in view than mere money-making—a philanthropic end. I know it may seem Utopian to



exact the same of all—even to think that all, in this money-mania age, should look with as careful an eye to the interests of humanity as to their own pockets ; but this is the Christian ideal which Dr. Wilmarth labored to make actual, and to which Christendom must finally come.

But though, as I have before said, he regretted, and had reason to regret, that he did not accumulate more property than he did, when he had youth, health, and opportunity on his side, so that he might enjoy more of the extra conveniences and comforts of life, than he was able to enjoy, with his limited means, he never would have changed his course materially, had he remained many years longer on the earth. He would always have been very moderate in his charges to the poor ; never exorbitant with the rich ; always liberal and generous in his charities. And he never could have been a “ fashionable ” man, or really extravagant in any of his expenditures. I doubt not that the same great, guiding principle of benevolence, would have governed him, even if he could have lived his life over again. He would have been a plain, unostentatious, “ people’s ” man ; and not a favorite with such as think more of sound and show, than of sense and substantial worth. And

the Hydropathic Establishment which he and Dr. Hero had just opened, at Westboro', about the time of his death, was designed, principally, to bring the Water-Cure within the reach of the middling classes. He was aware that he was not adapted to please the votaries of luxury, and those who were desirous of being provided for, and waited upon, in the most genteel, polite, and subservient manner, and whose tastes would be offended by every little departure from the etiquette of their circle; and he knew, also, that they had not sufficient means to fit up their house in a style that would suit such persons. He was willing, therefore, that they should go where Dignity and Fashion preside, and all the luxuries and slaves are furnished that money will pay for. He did not like to cater to such a class, and could not conscientiously do so, without an occasional reproof of their unchristian mode of life. He thought it sinful for them to be so exacting upon the time and services of others, so fastidious in their tastes, and so extravagant in their demands for elegance and luxury; and he could not compromise with their spirit to the extent necessary to please. The wealthy who were governed by common sense, by justice, by humanity, by the Gospel of Christ,

and who only demanded reasonable attentions and courtesies, and things that were convenient, comfortable, and suitable to their health and condition, he thought as much of as he did of the poor—no less, no more. And *many* such, he, of course, found during his long and extensive practice. Some of them were reckoned among his warmest, truest friends. But his mission was chiefly to those whom the world had not favored with wealth and its usual accompaniments.

It was, however, the intention of himself and Dr. Hero to fit up their new Establishment in a manner that should please the eye and gratify the taste of all the lovers of neatness, order, and simple beauty, who are reasonable and moderate in their expectations; as well as to make it a comfortable, convenient, and pleasant abode for the invalid, from even the higher walks of life. In one of his letters to Dr. Hero—written from New Lebanon soon after purchasing the place—he says: “That beautiful spot of earth (if Providence permit) shall be rendered far more beautiful and attractive, ere long, by fruits and flowers, and walks, and shades, surrounding a Hydropathic Institute. It is a good place to make shine. A better is not to be found in Mass.,

and we and our wives are the men and women to do it. But we will make our *patients* shine also, if they will but submit to and follow our directions."

From this brief extract, we see that Dr. W.'s ideal "Hydropathic Institute," embodied not only convenience and comfort, but likewise ornament and beauty; and he never sacrificed the latter excepting to utility or necessity—to the Christian idea of self-denial. If *all* homes could have been beautified, most gladly would he have seen them so; but all artificial and costly beauty caused unpleasant sensations to him, when he contrasted it with the squalor and wretchedness which he often saw by the side of it. "Let us not," he would say, "lavish our means merely to gratify our tastes, when so many have not so much as the absolute necessities of life. Let us wait till 'the good time coming' shall have come, before we thus give ourselves to self-indulgence and pleasure." And this was certainly honorable to his heart, to his humanity, if it were not according to the practices of many, nor up to the latest æsthetic philosophy. His doctrine of self-denial was also in accordance with the spirit, life, and precepts of Jesus, whom he reverently recognized as Master. He wanted neither the services of men nor the

products of their toil, by which to elevate and aggrandize himself and family ; and rather than appropriate them to such an end, he contented himself without many of the superfluities of life, which he would have highly valued and enjoyed, if those around him could have secured them also. Let "the disciples of the Beautiful" repudiate his philosophy, if they must, but let them likewise honor his spirit and his motive.

But his friends, I think, would generally admit that he was formerly rather too "puritanical," in his treatment of the tastes, indulgences and demands, of the more genteel and fashionable classes of society, and thereby made himself unnecessarily disagreeable to them. Yet these even, I am sure, always respected him on becoming thoroughly acquainted with his character. They did not, at first, understand each other. What they considered essentials—essential elegancies, perhaps—in personal apparel and in household furnishings—he considered superfluous, and as coming from a species of *pride*, which ought to be renounced as unchristian ; the cost of which should be bestowed upon the various causes of Philanthropy. He was preëminently a utilitarian in all such matters.

Cherishing these views, he would sometimes speak in such a manner, in the presence of fashion and luxury, as to give offense. It was not his method, politely and gracefully to conform to what he deemed thus unchristian, but to *seem* just what he *was*. Some patients, therefore, who came to his Water-Cure Establishment, did not find the extra conveniences and the embellishments of life that they desired, and were not satisfied to remain. Hence, it is not probable that he ever would have secured the patronage of the class under notice ; their tastes and customs inclining and their means enabling them to go to establishments fitted up at great expense, and in a manner adapted even to those who have lived in palaces.

But it ought not, however, to be inferred from his peculiarity in regard to the fashions of the world, that he cherished any hostility toward those who were conformed to them, or treated them rudely. He was no agrarian, envying the wealthy, and wishing to bring them all down to the common level—only a believer in Christian equality, growing out of fraternity and a mutual interest in each other's welfare—each being for all and all for each. And he was, indeed, getting to be somewhat more compla-

cent in his latter days, toward the "superfluous" expenditures of wardrobe and household, than he formerly was—a little more "worldly," some of the more rigid economists would say; and really so, according to his early ideal. Would his means have admitted of it, he would have laid out rather more money in these directions, than he would have once thought commendable or exactly in harmony with "the simplicity that is in Christ." He would have worn a little nicer coat, rode in a little nicer carriage, and supplied his house with a little nicer furniture. Occasionally, his wife says, he would incidentally express a slight regret that he was not, at least, able to keep up rather nearer to the times, in these particulars. But he would almost always end, by saying: "Well, it is all right—I have as good fortune as I deserve"

But such as he was, with all his limitations and imperfections, few men have had more affectionate and devoted friends than he had. All who were intimate with him, knew his faults—so unconcealed were they—but they honored him still, loved him, and greatly enjoyed his society. Always was he a most welcome guest at their homes—so social, so humorous, so fraternal, and so instructive, withal, was

he. Personally, I have often felt, since his departure from us, an almost overpowering grief at the loss sustained. Deeply, painfully, conscious am I, that one of the most valuable gifts and blessings of life and of Providence, has been taken from me. Though not without the hope of seeing him again, and joyfully recognizing him and being recognized by him—even with this hope, strong and satisfying as it is—I nevertheless still lament and mourn his untimely exit. It is hard to be reconciled to the event—especially as the remembrance of its cause and character revives. And many, I am confident, most fully and heartily sympathize with these expressions of affection and sorrow—a sorrow which words are powerless to express. But the world to come has the greater interest and value to us, for *his* being there. We will comfort and strengthen ourselves by the prospect of an ultimate reünion, both in person and in various pursuits mutually commenced on earth, thanking the Father of all spirits for the great hope inspired by Him within us.

But we mourn for him, also, as our family Physician, whose place no one can, in all respects, fill. He had enjoyed the advantage of a long and extensive practice, and with his remarkable powers of the

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most minute and critical observation, he had acquired a knowledge of disease such as few possess, even among the most eminent of his profession. Before his conversion to Hydropathy, his friends who had adopted that system, deemed it a very great privilege to have him daily with them, when they, or their families, were sick, simply for the purpose, if nothing more, of keeping them informed as to the nature and progress of the disease preying upon them. And notwithstanding they might manifest to him much more faith in water, or even in nature, than in his scientific drugs, his wisdom and counsel were always at their service. Though they could not trust him to deal out nauseating and poisonous medicines, they could most implicitly trust him as a man of conscience, candor, integrity and fraternity ; and he had none of that foolish and wicked professional pride, that often turns away in a rage from those who are indisposed to give themselves wholly up to Allopathic treatment—the spirit that sacrifices a patient to a point of medical etiquette or honor.

And in this respect, as in some others, where and when shall we again find one to compare favorably with him ? That other physicians there are, in the world, equally humane and Christian, I doubt not ;

but they are few and far between. Some of Dr. W.'s old friends know not where they are, and are often greatly troubled as to what way they shall look for the advice their necessities demand—advice that they can confidently rely upon as entirely honest and disinterested. Him they knew to be just as much of a Christian in his profession as at Church—as conscious of accountability to God every day, and in the sick room, as on Sunday, and in religious observances. Indeed, his views as to the responsibility of the medical profession were similar to those which he held respecting the ministerial profession. The minister and the doctor, he thought, should both labor as called of, and accountable to, God, in the discharge of the duties of their profession. The succeeding extract of a letter to Adin Ballou, in 1840, reveals his views and feelings upon the subject. He says:—

“ At the time I received your letter I was hard pressed with business, care and responsibility, among the sick, by night and day, which continued through the winter months, so that I am worn down by labor, and watching, and anxiety ; and, till very recently, I have scarcely had time to sleep and eat, sufficient to sustain my mortal frame, while my mind is so tired at times, I hardly know where I am, or wheth-

er in the body or out of it. You may think me *ultra* in my statements ; but however easy and indifferent others may be in the practice of medicine, it is not for me to have quiet sleep and cheerful meals, whilst the responsibility of a fellow mortal's lingering life is in my hands. You know it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful. How then can the conscientious and faithful minister, or physician, in their respective professions, enjoy that quiet and repose so much desired by man, when they see so much disease of mind and body around them and in their midst ? It is impossible. They must deny themselves, and labor for the good of man, whether honored or rewarded in this world or not."

A physician who honestly and with a whole heart, cherishes the views of his profession thus expressed, may be safely confided in as one who will not deal treacherously, or even carelessly, with any of his patients ; but labor for their restoration to health, according to the best of his skill and knowledge. Alas ! that such conscientiousness is so rarely seen in any sphere of life. It is not singular that so many should be in great grief at the loss of the good man, doubtful whether they shall ever see another physician whose judgment and heart, both, they can so implicitly trust ! But wisdom dictates that we submit ourselves in resignation to the fatality that

- took him from us ; hoping also that his example will attract others of his profession to an imitation of all his noble and Christian qualities.

In the following chapter I shall present several Letters—some from those who knew him intimately—as valuable testimonials to his great worth. A part of them, as will be seen, were addressed, as expressions of sympathy and condolence, to Mrs. Wilmarth, and a part of them to myself. Others of a like character that have been received, would be gladly presented, but my limits prevent.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Letters expressive of respect and affection for the deceased, and of condolence for his bereaved family.

FROM ADIN BALLOU.

*Hopedale, March 30, 1854.*

DEAR BR. FISH :—

As you are engaged in preparing a Memoir, now nearly completed, of our beloved Brother, the lamented Dr. Wilmarth, permit me to express my cordial approbation of your very laudable undertaking. It will be a tribute to the memory of one whose moral and intellectual, professional and social worth no book can adequately set forth. But less than such a tribute his friends would be inexcusable not to unite in offering. I fear your materials, so far as papers and documents are concerned, may be too meager for such a Biography as we should all be glad to see laid before the world. But I have no doubt you will make good use of the few which exist to tell the outlines of his eminently active, useful and beneficent life. The rest must remain inscribed on the tablets of the many thousands of human spirits, in and out of the flesh, who drank from the ever

brimming cup of our Brother's charity, skill, counsel, sympathy and coöperation.

He was a self-made, conscientious, progressive, humane, Christian man, ever active in his mission, and abundant in those good works done in secret, which reap their richest reward in the heavens. As a physician, few probably ever worked harder, earned more, and received less of temporal recompense. As a moral reformer, a philanthropist, and a practical Christian, we with whom he was most intimately associated know his excellence, and are glad to do him honor. But his spirit has gone to the circles of the blest, the affinities of those immortal spheres, where harmony and sweet concord of souls will gently waft him upward and onward forevermore.

His exit from this mortal realm was most sudden and appalling. But the pangs of his final struggle must have been mercifully brief, compared with those which await most of us who live to lament him. And, thanks be to God for our holy faith, we have no doubt that those momentary pangs introduced his emancipated soul into that land of which he loved so well to sing in our religious meetings :

“There is a land of pure delight,  
Where saints immortal reign ;  
Infinite day excludes the night,  
And pleasures banish pain.  
Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood  
Stand dressed in living green ;

•        So to the Jews old Canaan stood,  
          While Jordan rolled between."

In that heavenly land may we all be ready to join him, when our summons shall come ; be it amid the horrors of an overwhelming catastrophe, like that which swept him away, or on the peaceful bed of home, surrounded by ministering and weeping friends. Meantime, as his mortal remains sleep in our humble Cemetery, and the monumental stone points out their resting place, may the Memoir you are preparing go forth, a welcome testimonial among his numerous friends in all parts of the country, and to after generations, of preëminent departed worth. Thus will justice be done to his memory, and at the same time a most salutary moral influence be exerted on the world. I wish your undertaking all the success which I am sure it so richly merits.

Fraternally yours,

ADIN BALLOU.

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FROM DR. JOSIAH PRESCOTT.

*Winthrop, Me., May 14, 1853.*

MRS. WILMARTH :

*My Dear Friend* :—It is with the deepest sorrow for the untimely death of your beloved husband, that I address you these few lines of condolence. More particularly do I do this, as I came quite near shar-

ing the same fate in that awful catastrophe at Norwalk, on Friday morning last. The little band of Hydropathic Physicians had just closed the annual business of their Association, with great unanimity, and the kindest feelings, at Dr. Wellington's, on Thursday evening; some of whom had taken their leave of us, while those remaining were arranging to leave in the morning for our respective homes. I thought myself quite happy in accepting the kind and cordial invitation of Dr. Wilmarth, to take the first morning train with him, and spend Friday night at your house. We retired together in the same bed, at Dr. Wellington's, where we kept up our conversation to a very late hour. Just before retiring to bed, Dr. Bedortha urged the propriety of my stopping till afternoon, for further conference with Fowlers & Wells in relation to the publication of the Water-Cure Journal. Dr. Wilmarth arose at 4 o'clock, for the purpose of finding his valise, and was to meet me at the Depot before the departure of the first, or 8 o'clock Train. I then expressed some doubts about going with him, on account of the suggestions of Dr. Bedortha: yet, if I decided to go, would meet him in time. This ended our last interview in this world; for I remained till 5 P. M., and took the Boat route to Stonington. Had I followed out my own feelings and inclination at the time, I certainly should have gone, in company with Dr. Wilmarth.



Oh, how mysterious are the ways of Providence ! The news of the horrible disaster reached the city before I left ; but no particulars as to who was either dead or alive could be ascertained. I laid down in my berth while going over the Sound, but sleep had departed. Dr. Wilmarth's image stood before me during the live-long night, for I almost knew that he went in the same train, and I could not resist the conclusion that he was numbered with the dead. On reaching Boston on the morning of Saturday, I hoped to be relieved from the tormenting suspense, and to find his name amongst the living. Oh ! no—his name was not to be found there. This confirmed my suspicions almost beyond a doubt, that his fate was sealed ; but the body was not yet found. Nor did I learn all the facts till one hour ago, through the Boston papers,—though I wrote to Drs. Wellington and Taylor yesterday, apprising them of my apprehensions of Dr. Wilmarth's fate, hoping they would immediately ascertain the facts, and write me the result of their inquiries. But alas ! it has come ; and to you how overwhelming the awful dispensation !

My dear wife joins with me (and has abundant reason, under the circumstances of the case, though a stranger to you,) in deep feelings of sympathy and condolence, for such a heart-rending bereavement. Yet, the painful occurrence is not without many

considerations of a consoling nature. The transition from life to death was so sudden, that but little or no suffering could have been endured. And above all, your husband's useful life and true Christian character, are worthy of imitation by the living, and will certainly secure the approving plaudit of "*well done, good and faithful servant.*"

By reputation I have been acquainted with Dr. Wilmarth for more than three years ; but personally, during the short interview only of two or three days of last week. But the peculiar circumstances that brought us together, were calculated to cement a lasting friendship, had we both lived to enjoy it. You will doubtless recollect our meeting at Dr. Rolfe's lecture-room about a year since, when I expressed a strong desire to become acquainted with your husband. Little did I think then, that our acquaintance would thus take place, and end under such distressing circumstances. \* \* \*

You may be assured of receiving any assistance, in my power to render, that you may need, either in personal services or advice, in this trying crisis of your domestic affairs, which must weigh so heavily upon you by this unexpected bereavement.

Believe me, then, your sincere  
friend and humble servant,

JOSIAH PRESCOTT.

FROM DAVID RICE, M. D.

*Boston, May 10, 1853.*

O, my dear Mrs. Wilmarth:—Can it be! Can it be! that your husband, my dear friend, Dr. Wilmarth, is dead! I have just taken up the evening paper and learned the dreadful fact! The Lord be merciful unto you in this heart-rending calamity. O, I feel sad, sad, sad! Cut off in the midst of his days, just when a wide field of bright visions was opening before him! I did not even dream that Dr. Wilmarth could have been on those ill-fated Cars. I cannot write more now, for silent grief overcomes me. The Lord shield you in your distress!

DAVID RICE.

Mrs. Phila O. Wilmarth.

FROM NANCY FRENCH.

*Fulton, N. Y., May 19, 1853.*

MY DEAR MRS. WILMARTH:—

Is it so? Can it be? that you are written, widow! desolate, in such an unexpected and heart-rending manner! It must be true, for I have just read the name of DOCT. BUTLER WILMARTH, among the crushed ones, at the ill-fated 'draw-bridge,' at Norwalk. O, that it was in my power to administer consolation to you, in this deeply afflictive providence

of God. Words colored in the deepest dye are too inadequate to reach the deep fountain of sorrow that overwhelms your stricken heart ! I have ever cherished a high regard for your dear husband, since the first acquaintance of my dear and much-lamented Edward with him. In a letter from E., he says : " Mother, I wish you could become acquainted with Dr. Wilmarth ; he reminds me of my father. \*\* He is the nearest perfection of any man I ever saw. I not only find in him every qualification that is desirable in a physician, but I find in him a friend and counsellor that can be trusted."

Dr. Wilmarth has kindly written me letters of condolence, since E.'s death, which touched the sorrows of my broken heart ! He succeeded beyond any one else, to console and quiet my nervous temperament, so that I could view the providences of God in their true light. O, that I possessed his talent, to console you, and your dear children, now in this time of trial.

[Here follow some consolatory extracts, which are omitted.] •

But I must close by expressing to you my deep sympathy and kind and earnest wishes for your resignation and future happiness.

Yours truly in affliction,

NANCY FRENCH.

FROM DANIEL S. WHITNEY.

*Southboro', June 19, 1853.*

DEAR BROTHER FISH:—

I want to thank you for undertaking to prepare a brief Memoir of our very dear friend, the late Dr. Butler Wilmarth. I think in no instance in this mystical drama of life has my soul so struggled against an event of the passing scene, as it has against that which, in an instant, removed beyond the veil of flesh, this dearly loved Friend.

We fancy that the problem of life has been clearly thought out. At least, we think this is the case, so far as the event which we call death is concerned. There is evidently nothing more certain than this—the living must sometime die. There is nothing more uncertain than the when, the how, the what, of this event, in any individual case. It is, then, the clear dictate of reason, the highest impulse of wisdom, the common sense of religion, to go forth in the morning, and in the evening come to our rest in a state of preparation to be called hence ourselves; and not only so, but also to be ready to hear with composure that our most tenderly-cherished friend has passed the portals of death. Ah! yes, this ought to be our state of mind. But then, who carries about him in the hubbub of daily life this clear reason, this impulse of heavenly wisdom, this common sense of religion? When we see the event slowly but inevitably advancing upon us, we call to our aid

these divine helps. But when the thunder breaks upon us from a clear sky, the crash, though really no heavier than we have before heard from an overhanging cloud, yet, being all unlooked for, becomes much more startling.

At first, we felt very sorry that we did not learn the Dr.'s fate in season to join the bereaved procession that followed what was earthly to its earthy resting place. As time passes, we think less of this. Some how, it seems almost impossible to separate our own sufferings, in such a case, from the object whose sudden departure causes them. It seems as if the departed must be partakers of our grief. And who shall show that, to some extent, at least, this is not the case?

Our last recollections of the dear Doctor were very pleasant—entirely characteristic—and a mere statement of some circumstances attending them will convey an idea of his professional integrity, as well as of his genial and communicative habits in private life. On the Sunday preceding his death, we were favored by one of his friendly calls. Miss Lucy Stone was to lecture at five o'clock, P. M., and he finally concluded to stay and hear her. We had a joyous time. We were all delighted with the lecture, and our time before it commenced was occupied in the discussion of the great topics which are now moving and reforming the world. The Dr., in the course of the conversation, called our attention to a

cure which he had just effected. Just one week before, he had been called, in great haste, to see a woman-whose friends looked upon her as past cure, if not beyond all relief. Indeed, her husband had expressed his fears that they might not find her living when they should arrive at his home. She had been for some time under the treatment of another physician, without benefit, and the hydropathist was called in as a last resort. Matters could not possibly be made worse, and might possibly be improved. He found the patient living; but in a very weak state, and subject to sinking turns, which led her friends to suppose that at any time she might be taken from her sufferings. As he sat by his patient, making inquiries and thinking over the case, he discovered near by, a snuff-box. He immediately inquired if she took snuff; and was answered in the affirmative. He inquired how often; and was answered, that when she felt so bad perhaps she took a pinch once in fifteen minutes. After examining, critically, the symptoms, he was satisfied that the snuff greatly aggravated her troubles, if it were not the prime cause of her sickness. He at once laid before her his convictions; told her that without doubt he could procure her relief if she would follow his directions. She must put away, at once, her snuff—abandon it entirely—this was the main condition. He then ordered some slight applications of water, and gave such directions concerning diet as

the case seemed to demand, and was about leaving, when the patient demanded, with much earnestness, what she *should* do if the sinking turns came round again ? He gave her assurance that they would not come if she complied with his directions, and left. In one week he called upon her again, (that is, on the day of which I have been speaking, when we last saw him,) and found her attending to the duties of her household. She had been strongly tempted to take a social pinch with a neighbor, who had called upon her, but had found strength to resist the temptation, and was rejoicing in her improved health and great deliverance. The terrible sinking turns did not come back again. This straight-forwardness in the way of his duty marked his character. He doubtless sometimes offended people by it. For most people like to have their evil habits treated tenderly. But it never failed to command the respect of good men, and often, as in the above case, led directly to great and good results, which could be come at in no other way. This manly and Christian course is doubtless the secret (an "open secret," indeed,) of his rapid progress in the town of Westboro', where his professional labors terminated.

I do not remember of ever hearing him express a belief, or intimate, that he felt a presentiment, that his life would be terminated by casualty. It is certain, however, that he had a feeling of great aversion to dying by any such means, and thought more about

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it than men in general do. I remember very distinctly how earnestly he spoke upon the subject in a letter, which I am sorry cannot be found, soon after a season of some peril in the Sound, near Hurlgate, during a thick fog. His earnest exclamation was—"I don't want to die so. I don't want to be smashed up or scalded to death, and hurried out of the world without a moment's warning." He then quoted a few lines of poetry, descriptive of the way in which he would die :—

"At home, in bed, with weeping friends around."

It is certainly a very pleasant reflection, that, if this dear man was not permitted thus to die in the bosom of his family, few, *very* few, of our race are better prepared by an upright and Christian life for such a sudden summons to the unseen world. And we may, with truth, add, that, among the thousands who are yearly called to mourn the loss of dear ones thus snatched away in a moment, when they are looking not for it, few indeed are better prepared by a meek and gentle spirit to bear up under such crushing calamities than the dear companion of his bosom, and efficient adviser and helper in all his labors to bless mankind and do good in his day and generation.

But in the midst of life and its labors he passed away. His plans of usefulness were unfulfilled, his resources for doing good unexhausted, his powers ripe for a harvest of blessings to his fellow men ; yet

his life was no failure. His life was a daily success. In things great and small he was wont to say—"If the Lord will." And it is only by catching a portion of the same spirit, that we can find comfort in the sad event which has removed him from our midst. But I will not trespass farther. I heartily thank you for undertaking this good work, and I hope you will give it to us as speedily as possible.

Yours fraternally,

D. S. WHITNEY.

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FROM DR. J. H. HERO.

WM. H. FISH:

*Dear Friend*:—Since the death of Dr. Wilmarth, I have felt, as it were, like a child without a parent; for he always seemed like a father to me. In fact, he *was* my *medical* father; having taken the deepest interest in my welfare from the time I first commenced the study of medicine. During the first year of my practice, particularly, he was of invaluable service to me, always holding himself in readiness to lend me his aid and counsel at all times when needed, whilst other physicians were using their influence against me.

It always did me good to meet him, if our meeting was but for five minutes; for his words were words of encouragement. He would frequently say

to me, (while I was laboring under difficulties which every young physician has to encounter,) "go on ; all must creep before they can walk ; it will be your turn to give counsel by and by ;" always ending his remarks with that peculiar laugh of his, all of which tended to give me new hopes and desires to become master of my profession, and to be able to do good to suffering humanity.

After having had four years' practice, and some seven years' intimate acquaintance with this dear friend, we formed a partnership in business, and purchased this place, (at Westboro',) for the purpose of fitting it up to receive patients, that we might be better able to carry out the great principles of reform in the science of medicine. We commenced our practice together on the first day of last March ; and never had I known the Dr. to appear more cheerful and happy, or to enjoy better health, than he did from the time we commenced practice together to the time of his death, at that terrible Norwalk disaster.

The news of his death came to me like a thunderbolt ; though I had been in sad suspense for two or three days previous. Never, from childhood, have I shed such a flood of tears as I shed for that good man. Never have I seen the man for whom my attachment was stronger than for him. He would stand by friend or foe, so far as he considered them right, if the whole world besides were against him.

Never have I been acquainted with a more conscientious person than he. If he failed to do justice to any one, that one was himself.

All who knew him seemed to enjoy his society. He had a peculiar faculty to interest people, whether young or old. He was always familiar and social with his patients, so much so, that I have often heard them remark, that he seemed like one of their family, and that they were always happy to see him, whether they required his services or not.

He has also left a large circle of friends to mourn his loss in this town, though he was with them but a few months. I have heard many persons in West-boro' remark, since his death, that they never knew a person to gain the entire confidence of so large a number in so short a time, as had Dr. Wilmarth during his stay in their midst. The people seemed to have rejoiced that he had come among them. They were pleased with him. Even many who did not believe in his mode of practice, confessed that they "liked the *man*—so unassuming; so plain, so honest," they say, "he showed what he was on first acquaintance." And so he did. He was Dr. Wilmarth here, he was Dr. Wilmarth there, he was Dr. Wilmarth every where. All who well knew him, respected and loved him.

But he has gone, and we can never behold that noble brow and benignant form, nor receive his counsels more, on this earth. It is hard for me to recon-

cile myself to his death, cut off as he was, in an instant, with many others, and whilst he was in health and usefulness, by the recklessness of those under whose care they had placed their lives!

My connection with Dr. Wilmarth was a happy one. I have thought many times, since his death, that it was too good to be lasting. Many hundred miles have we rode together, many pleasant days have we spent in each other's society, and never did the first word of difficulty pass between us during our six or seven years' intimate acquaintance.

Our families were well suited to each other. Mrs. Hero's attachments for the Dr. and his family were very strong, and we both lament his loss most deeply. Yet there is a consolation in feeling that he is still progressing, and that his useful and Christian life is a worthy example to us all.

Yours most sincerely,

J. H. HERO.

Wm. H. Fish.

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FROM DR. LEVI REUBEN.

*Wilmington, Del., Sept. 27, 1853.*

MR. WM. H. FISH:

*Dear Sir*:—A stranger to yourself, I am induced to write you through the suggestion of our mutual friend, Dr. J. H. Hero, of Westboro', Mass.,

and still more by the love and respect I entertain for that lamented friend of us all, who is the subject of the brief and imperfect remarks that follow :

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Among the leading features in the character of our lamented friend, would seem to have been his inflexible honesty of thought and purpose, which discarded from the conduct of life all that in many others gets so much credit under the name of *tact*, or so much charity under the title of *expediency*. This simple straight-forwardness constituted a prominent and beautiful element of all his intercourse with his fellows. Truth and purity, to him, did not sit on inaccessible heights, to be only dreamed of, and deified, and forgotten ; but they came down to him, dwelt in his heart, sat on his lips, and won substantial homage in the actions of his every-day life. With the rare merit of not being thereby made a cynic, he seemed possessed of an utter disrelish and aversion for the petty connivances, the falsities, and the dissimulations, which have incorporated themselves to so deplorable an extent into all the relations of business—indeed, into the whole structure of society. These he hated sincerely ; and yet he lost not on that account his love for, or his generous sympathy with his fellow-men. Possessed in a large degree of a practical insight into the secret springs lying at the bottom of all the workings of the human heart,—an intuition that stripped the gauze from

semblances, and deciphered with a clear eye the rigid outlines of realities, he could but hate shams and plausibilities, and long to see THE REAL made the universal object of interest, of search, and of devotion.

Thus, from insight, and from love alike, would our friend have been more than the physician of the bodies of individuals. He would have been the physician of hearts and heads—a Healer of the maladies of society. Indeed, to such an extent as they would allow, with whom he met, he was such. A quiet, but controlling atmosphere of resistance to injustice and chicanery, and a love for uprightness and truth, went with him wherever he went, and quickened the latent *manhood* of those on whom its influence fell.

But Dr. Wilmarth lived too late, or far too early, to be appreciated at his true value. The days of “patriarchal simplicity” have passed away. Man has ere this age “sought out many inventions ;” and it will take the stern tutelage of ages to come to bring him back to a universal recognition of the great truths, that, no matter how *Cunning* may have grown in her cunningness, her aid were better never invoked, and that, no matter how hopeless and barren the path of unflinching rectitude may grow before us, there is no other for which we can safely desert it ! To these truths men will come eventually, because no experience is lost on the human mind,

however little we may at once see the fruits of it; and when that day has arrived, then may such as he whom we now mourn, receive the appreciation and the honor they really deserve.

I cannot more appropriately close this brief tribute, than by introducing a few extracts from letters written me by the deceased, while in the pursuit of a business in which he experienced some disappointments. His integrity did not desert him at such a time, but only proved its own genuineness. Says he, in a letter dated July 11, 1851, "I am very suspicious when I see the world running wild after a particular individual, that he carries some *charm* about him. 'The end justifies the means,' is the established motto of this world; and it has become so inwrought into the very soul of society, that people stand aghast at one who is, clear through, dissect him as you will, *an honest man*. To be 'shrewd,' or 'a little old,' to 'humbug a little for folks' good,' to be wise enough not to tell 'the whole truth,'—these have become oracular precepts with the present generation." Again, he says, "Can there not be some feasible way to enlighten the public a little faster? It seems as though the Medical world was as slow in its formations, as the *mineral*. Let us each put our mark upon the layer now depositing; so that those who come after us may know it by its purity, malleability and richness."

In a letter dated Sept. 25th of the same year, he



writes, "One thing more. I wish all my motives were *pure*. I am not wholly blind to my own faults and weakness; but I desire to be frank, truthful and honest, with all men. What is a man, or a woman, without a character for truth? Nothing—worse than nothing, to confide in. When will human beings bear a clairvoyant inspection of character? What a pity we cannot be taken at par! Whether a man be Doctor or patient, proprietor or bath-servant, for heaven and earth's sake, let him be *honest*. This world will never be cured of its maladies, moral or physical, by 'shrewdness.'"

In his last letter to me, he writes, "Science and humanity are slowly progressing towards perfection; but *thousands on thousands must die on the way*. Let us contribute our mite to the great ocean of truth, and light, and love, that will ultimately overflow and sweep away the masses of error, darkness and discord, that afflict poor, fallen humanity!"

Such was the hope,—such were the principles, and kindred to these was the life of our friend, who has been called so early from a field in which he was needed. Of such it may be truly said, that they are the "salt of the earth." When shall we find society more liberally *seasoned* with the influence of such minds? We may hope, indeed, that the breach occasioned in society, by the departure of this good man, will be filled in time; but alas! time can never restore to the circle of home, the

endeared father, or to his many admirers, their faithful friend.

Allow me to subscribe myself, Sir, your well-wisher and humble servant,

LEVI REUBEN.

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FROM REV. JOHN F. JUDD.

*Montgomery, N. Y., June 22, 1853.*

MR. FISH :

*Dear Sir :—*It was my privilege to be a patient of the late Dr. Wilmarth, while located at New Græfenberg, N. Y. Though from the feeble state of my health; prevented from cultivating his acquaintance as intimately as I desired, I saw sufficient of him to impress me with a sense of his great worth, both as a man, and as a physician.

Naturally gifted with a quick perception, he was a close observer of men and things: his examinations were thorough, his judgment ready and sound. While these characteristics inspired his patients with confidence in his professional ability, his tender sympathies, kindness of manner, cheerful disposition, and general sociability, endeared him as a friend.

His mind was well cultivated and richly stored, his conversation both entertaining and instructive; and his patients can all, I think, testify to his happy

faculty of raising their drooping spirits, by his humorous recitations.

Conscientiousness and benevolence were both large in his phrenological development; and both were conspicuous in the activities of his life. He despised all that was low and mean, yet cheerfully rendered honor where it was due. His heart was quickly touched either at the sight or recital of human misery and woe; while his hand and purse were as readily affected as his feelings, and both were cheerfully opened to relieve the suffering.

Dr. W. repeatedly expressed to me his regret, that the charges at Water-Cures, generally, were so high as to exclude the extremely poor from their benefits, and he hoped to live to effect, in this respect, a much-needed reform—so as to bring the benefits of Hydropathic treatment within the range of the most destitute.

He despised every species of quackery, and deeply regretted that much of it was held in hydropathic solution. While his confidence in Hydropathy was fixed, he realized that it was often injured by the extravagance, ignorance and quackery of its professed friends. In a letter now in my possession, speaking of a recent Water-Cure Circular, he says:—  
“There is much truth in it; but it is put forth without the usual discount I am in the habit of making in such cases. Let us have the *whole* truth—unfavorable as well as favorable. There is nothing gain-

ed, either to an individual or to the world, by overrating, exaggerating, or misrepresenting ; and, if there *was*, it would be *wrong* to do it." This brief paragraph is a faithful index to his character. He loved truth and right. The fact that a thing was untrue or wrong was a sufficient reason, in the decision of his judgment, to leave it unheeded or undone, even though a contrary course might promise temporal honor, fame or wealth.

The fidelity and kindness of Dr. Wilmarth to me, as his patient, and their continuance after this relation between us had ceased to exist, have made an indelible impression on my heart. While faithful in disclosing whatever he believed unfavorable in my symptoms, by word of mouth while with him, and since by letter, he would add something to lead me to "hope on, hope ever," in humble reliance on God's almighty aid.

Dr. W. was a liberal hearted Christian—cheerful, active, faithful ; believing in the common brotherhood of man, and hoping for salvation through the merits of that Savior who died for *all*.

As a husband and father, he was in many respects a pattern for all ; his wife was his *companion*—not a mere domestic drudge ; his children were drawn near to him by kindness and familiarity, while his high moral worth led them to "honor their father."

But the man, physician, husband, father and Christian, is no more ! Yes, the *better* part of him

is, we believe, forever with God above ; while his memory is a precious legacy to those who mourn his loss below. As his life was a public blessing, so is his death a public calamity. May God cause his mantle, Elijah-like, to descend upon one worthy to fill his place ; while He comforts the widow and the fatherless with the blessings of this life, and the hope of joys in that to come.

JOHN F. JUDD.

## CHAPTER IX.

## Letters from Dr. Wilmarth.

THIS chapter is made up principally of Letters from Dr. Wilmarth to Dr. Hero, and are introduced here because they so strikingly illustrate some of the peculiar qualities of his mind and heart, and some of the prominent traits of his character, brought out in the body of the Memoir—particularly his *humor*, and his hostility to all “*humbuggery*.” The Letters to his Son may be specially serviceable to such young men as may be disposed to read them. They contain valuable advice.

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*New Græfenberg, N. Y., Sept. 28, 1853.*

DEAR DOCTOR:

You see I am close on the track of Allopathy, Wonderopathy, and Womanopathy, and when I have concentrated all the *pathies*, I will tell you what I intend to do with them, (if the Lord will that I should live a few years longer.) I can't give up the idea that there is a *downright honest* course that

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will let a Dr. live as well as his patients, and do them a great amount of good into the bargain. I shall keep trying to find that vein while I live. May be *you* can help me. What if we should hunt together one season?

B. WILMARTH.

*New Græfenberg, Jan. 1, 1852.*

DEAR DOCTOR :—

\* \* \* Diplomas are cheap now-a-days ; but I hope *you* will get one of the first quality, if it does cost more—i. e. get the *knowledge* first, and there will be no more trouble in getting a diploma than there is in getting married, when two kindred hearts happen to meet and fall desperately in love with each other. There will be medical priests enough glad to perform the ceremony. \* \* \* \*

Never mind ; the world will see, after a while, what it is to be *medically* wise, as well as morally. In the language of Pope :

“ ’Tis but to know how little can be known,  
To see all others’ faults and *feel* our own.”

Translated medically—

“ ’Tis but to learn how little can be done,  
To do that little and let the rest alone.

“Hands off” from my clock-work, I say, if you are going to tomahawk me, or poison me with your nostrums. I would rather trust dame Nature alone,

and the God of Nature, with a decent, kind-hearted nurse, and a plenty of pure, cold, tepid, or hot water, to carry me through a change of matter, than the whole tribe of Allopathic physicians in New England, armed and equipped as *their* "law directs." Indeed, the nearer armed and equipped according to law, the more I should fear them. If you wish to except any of our old antagonist friends, you may.

I continue to lecture to the New Yorkers about once a week, on the general subject of Medical Reform. My last was on "Medical Delusions." I wish you had been present to "witness to the truth." O, the blindness and superstition, and the ridiculous proceedings of both Drs. and patients! It seems as if neither had common *sense*, to say nothing about *science*. But a brighter day is dawning upon the invalid world, and it is our mission, I think, to diffuse the light of that day, by lighting our little torches at the great Source, and setting them upon a candle-stand, in some of the dark and benighted corners of the earth.

As I expected, there is lots of flummery and fussation in that new pathy about which I have written you before; as well as some valuable practical truth, which I am in a fair way to get hold of. So we go. I told them last night, that every want created a supply; that the world wanted to be humbugged, and I thought it had been well provided for.

B. WILMARTH.

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*Lebanon Springs, Sept. 1, 1852.*

DEAR DOCTOR :—

That gaseous form of a man (gas condensed) alias ———, called before your letter arrived and told his own story. I had a hard struggle to treat him as I wish to treat every body, viz., courteously. He was such a perfect personification of bombast, and an intolerable bore, withal, that I had a severe trial with him. He wondered that I could not cure my patients, (*all* of them, palsy and all); thought he could—felt of their pulse, &c. &c., and made quite a parade about here.

“Guess” he knows something; but not so much as to be any damage to his patients, though it might be *fatal* to him. I thought of tapping him while here, but I found he would not stay long enough to heal up; so I left it to nature, and his own *rule*, which, he says, “never fails him.” But so it goes. Humbug a good deal, with a little truth, if you want to make money.

\* \* What do you think I care for jack o’ lanterns, whatever form they assume? Gas can be condensed in human form, as well as in any other, if you only have a human skin prepared for it. Why not? There are those whose pores never transmitted a generous perspiration in all their life; but, like bladder-fish, they fill themselves with gas and puff it out at their mouths. Have you not seen them in ———? They abound in some regions. You will

pardon me this, when you recollect how disgusting all vanity and puffation are to me, and how much I desire plain, unvarnished truth.

As ever,

B. W.

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*New Græfenberg, Aug. 22, 1851.*

DEAR DOCTOR:—

Having obtained one of H.'s papers, "extra," I send it forthwith for your perusal. What will you think of such a man? I thought I had before sent you the greatest puff abroad, (viz. Dr. R——'s paper.) But, if possible, H. performs more wonders in the world than R. And there is ——, close by him, doing the same big business—\$15,000 a year! What do you think of that! How much could you and I do at this business together, if we should strip it of its mystery and humbuggery? If we could do *half*, I would go into it—would you not, with me? There is no doubt, however, but that they perform *some* very remarkable cures. I have conversed with patients who have been there, and have got a little inkling of the treatment. They do verily take some most dismal, bed-ridden cases, and bring them upon their feet in a comparatively short time—much shorter than pure Hydropathy would. Of this I have no doubt. But they do humbug, also, tremendously.

You will see, by the paper, that they cover *all* the

medical pathies and means, to catch all sorts of "fish." If I am privileged with going to —, I intend to scrutinize closely, if they will let me, (though I understand there is great secrecy about the business,) and whatever is true and valuable in their practice I shall adopt as I have opportunity. I am willing to learn truth from any quarter. Perhaps you may yet benefit some of your "nervous" patients by this new pathy.

As ever,

B. WILMARTH.

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*New Græfenberg, Aug. 22, 1851.*

DEAR DOCTOR:—

Go on—you are in the right position, I think. I hope you will prosper in every righteous undertaking. I am glad your "better half" is so "smart." She is a help-meet for you in this time of need. I think I might justly say, I have such an one myself. We have been lucky wights in matrimony, for which we have great reason to be thankful to the "Giver of every good gift." "He that findeth a *good* wife, findeth a good thing," (prize) worth more than the largest lump yet found on California's shore. But to return from this short episode on wives,—some of whom are *bad* things, too bad to think of, much more to write about,—I will talk a little on professional and other matters.

We are not quite up to you in patients—only 15 now. I intend to go a fishing again soon, and if they bite well, I shall continue at it, occasionally, through September and October, (if the Lord will.) I think that is the true and honest policy. Enlighten the people. Be candid. Hold out no false colors. Tell them how much to expect, and how much *not* to expect. Water-Cure has been overrated by some ; and a reaction, or rather, relaxation, has taken place. It has promised more than it could perform, and lost credit by it, as every false witness does. But Water-Cure itself, is not to blame for this. It is mercenary and ignorant representatives, that have been to blame. Never mind, it will find its true level yet. It is not to be laughed down, nor sneered, nor sneezed down. It has specific virtues that no other remedial system yet known, possesses. When its enthusiastic advocates have cooled off a little, and its enemies have been beaten back, and the public mind enlightened upon the subject, there will be a much more healthy and rational opinion and practice in relation to it.

Having tried Allopathy and Botanico-Thompsonism, to my satisfaction, for twenty years, and Hydropathy, more or less, for four years, I feel somewhat qualified to judge of the merits of each, so called, system ; and although I do not consider the Water-Cure system *perfect*, I do declare it, as my solemn conviction, incalculably better than any other

system of medication ever started. I can cure more with it—I can cure some with it that cannot be cured at all, by medicine; especially such cases as have already been poisoned half to death, by drug medication. Nevertheless, I will be candid on the other side. I honestly believe that some cases would be far less tedious, if a judicious use of mild medicines, principally tonic, in connection with the Water-Cure processes, was practiced. I have no sympathy with the doctrine that all medicines are evil only, and that continually, particularly that class which go to make up the constituent parts of the human system, as, iron, phosphorus, lime, salt, soda, acids, &c.—substances which we cannot subsist without. It is sheer nonsense to say it is always wrong to administer these substances, as well as some others, when the system is manifestly deficient in them. I admit that they may and will be acquired from proper diet and drink in time, if the patient lives long enough. What I affirm is, that the cure can be *hastened* by a large per cent., and therefore it ought to be given. Who wants to be drenched in skin and purse a year, if he can be cured by the aid of a little tonic medicine in six months? Nobody but zealous bigots, or extreme ultraists. It has often been said, and I believe with truth, that many would choose to die under orthodox medical treatment rather than be cured by Hydropathy. We have the same class of persons on the other side of the fence, who would

rather die under Hydropathy than take medicine. Such extreme exclusiveness is very foolish as well as wicked. But it proves the old story true, of the man who was canvassing the three professions, to see which would be the most lucrative, and finally decided to be a lawyer; for although people would give *something* to save their souls, and *considerable* to save their bodies, yet they would give *more* to have their *wills* than they would for soul and body both.

\* \* \* I do not like extremes in any thing. We live in a great world, and there are more things in it than some people have dreamed of. We see a great many wiseacres poking about with a little telescope before one of their eyes, and as Pope says:—

“Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,  
Yet ne’er looks *forward* farther than his nose.”

And yet the ninnies imagine they see all creation through. Let *us* not be like unto them, but examine all things within our power, gather the good and cast the bad away; and although our heads can hold but a fraction of the combined wisdom and knowledge in the world, we will try to keep them full, and deal it out to the best advantage to the fellow-beings within our influence, profiting by it ourselves also. We must give account of our stewardship by and by, and may we so live and improve our talents that we can do it “with joy and not with grief.”

Yours, as ever,

B. WILMARTH.

*New Græfenberg, Dec. 12, 1851.*

DEAR DOCTOR :—

I never before so much felt the need of *knowledge*, more knowledge ; I want to know the secret causes of nature, that produce the effects I *daily* see in the physical, mental and moral world. I mean to improve the remainder of my life in acquiring and dispensing knowledge, chiefly in relation to the physical world, and especially physical man,—(I don't mean physic, for man has taken a plenty of that already.) My faith grows stronger and stronger in God and nature, and less and less in pukes and physic. I am engaged in lecturing now-a-days, on the superstitious belief in drugs and charms, and trying to awaken a sound and rational faith in the power of God, implanted in the human organism, for its defense and restoration, when attacked by disease. But O, what havoc has been made ! How oft might Nature justly pray—"Save me from my friends, I will take care of my enemies." Physicians have acted like blind men armed with spears and clubs, in a rough-and-tumble contest, not knowing friend from foe, because they could not *see*. How many, think ye, have been slain in ———, by enlisting blind men to fight for Nature ? Echo, *many*.

As ever,

B. WILMARTH.

*New Græfenberg, Feb. 2, 1852.*

DEAR DOCTOR :—

Yours of the 30th came safe. I make a prompt, but brief reply. Glad you succeed so well in Pneumonia, both on yourself and others. It is easy to doctor if you know how, i. e. know enough to do no harm—that's half the battle.

“Of all the ills that suffering man endures,  
The largest fraction, liberal Nature cures ;  
Of those remaining, 'tis the *smallest* part  
Yields to the efforts of judicious art ;  
But simple Kindness, kneeling by the bed,  
To shift the pillow for the sick man's head ;  
Give the fresh draught to cool the lips that burn,  
Fan the hot brow, the weary frame to turn ;  
*Kindness*—untutored by our grave M. Ds.  
But Nature's graduate, whom she schools to please,  
Wins back more sufferers with her voice and smile,  
Than all the trumpery in the druggist's pile.”

*Extract from Dr. Holmes' "Morning Visit."*

There you have an Allopath's confession ! I can't stop to comment. I am at this time treating a case of Pneumonia with *kindness*, and *water*, and *air*, and *broth* ; and it operates like a charm to him, but is poverty to me ; for I can't keep him sick long enough to make anything out of the job.

If the Lord will, my wife and Phila will soon leave here—Phila for Hopedale School, my wife for a *higher* School, viz., “The Boston Female Medical College.” Like “Obadiah,” in the old school



book, we have just waked up to a sense of things, and resolved to "begin anew our journey and our life."

Yours, as ever,

B. WILMARTH.

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*New Lebanon Spa. July 4, 1852.*

DEAR SON :—

We were glad to hear from you last week. Glad you enjoy so good health. Glad you are able to perform so much labor. Glad you are so cautious, especially with regard to "burning fluid"—that you do not need a "scientific experiment" to convince you that it is "explosive," and dangerous in the extreme. But most of all, we are glad to believe that our son is endeavoring to walk in the paths of wisdom and righteousness. God has been good to us, who are your earthly parents, and to you, our child, in turning your feet into his testimonies. O, let them ever be your delight! Depart not from the law of the Lord. Labor for the best gifts, and abundance of grace. Go not within the influence of temptation to any crime, however small. Then will your path shine brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Be very careful of your physical health, as well as moral. Do not try so hard to do and earn much, as to do what you do *well*.

I have been to New Græfenberg, over a hundred miles distant, to see a young man about your age, with inflammation of the brain, in the last stage. He died in three days after. \*\* He was my patient last fall, and did exceedingly well under my care. But, not getting well *fast* enough, of his scrofula and sore eyes, (he was a hard student), he left Water-Cure and tried Allopathy; took large quantities of Iodine and Cicuta, determined his disease to his stomach and brain, which ended in death. Literally killed by Iodine! Mother says you knew him. It was E—— F——. He was a very intelligent and pious young man, and the world has met with a great loss in his death; but *he* rests in peace.

Yours, as ever,

B. WILMARTH.

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*New Græfenberg, Feb. 25, 1852.*

DEAR SON:—

\* \* \* I hope you will be careful of your health, and not tax your energies too much. Those headaches you complained of, are a *loud* warning not to go any farther, or rather, not so far. There is no doubt in my mind but the predisposing cause of Augustus Ballou's death, was over-action of the brain—exhaustion of the vital power. He was not fully consolidated, had a large, active brain, was

ambitious to excel, and probably was praised and put ahead—exerted himself to discharge his duties faithfully, and sunk a martyr to over-exertion of the young faculties of his mind.

Take warning by this sad event, and do what you can to escape the same fate. You had better go slower and be longer climbing the hill of learning and fame. God bless and preserve you, and us all, till we meet again.

From your affectionate father,

B. WILMARTH.

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With a few additional words, I must now take leave of my readers. The task of preparing this Memoir has been a pleasant, though, in some respects, a painful one; and no one can be more conscious than myself of the imperfect manner of its execution. It is also with regret that I am compelled to send it forth to the world without more accuracy and finish. I will only say, however, that, such as it is, I commend it to those who knew, esteemed, and loved Dr. Wilmarth, hoping that it will prove to them an acceptable offering: and if a wider circle shall receive it, as a well-meant, and not altogether unsuccessful, effort, to add one more to the class of

useful biographies which are issuing, in such large numbers, from the Press, I shall be more than satisfied; grateful to the Father of all spirits for the humble ability thus to serve Him, and the cause of righteousness and humanity. May the good Dr. so speak to many, at least, of his friends, by his example, herein recorded, and by the still small voice that comes from his presence in the spiritual and heavenly world, as to aid in preparing them for happy companionship with him hereafter.

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As some who may read this Memoir may be interested to know more of Dr. Wilmarth's family than they have hitherto learned, for their gratification, I would here say, that he left a wife and two children—a son and a daughter. The son is now twenty-two years of age, and the daughter thirteen. Mrs. Wilmarth has entered "The Female Medical College of Pennsylvania," established in the city of Philadelphia, and purposes going through with a three years' course of medical study, with a view, more particularly, to Obstetric practice. Her many friends are, therefore, relying upon her, partially, at least, to fill her husband's professional place, confi-

dent that her long experience and observation, as the wife of a Physician, together with the educational preparation that she is making, and her very excellent character, will enable her to be preëminently useful in her calling. Her permanent home, in all probability, will be Hopedale ; as will, also, that of her children. As the Directors of the Railroad Corporation, by the carelessness of whose servants Dr. Wilmarth lost his life, have been just and liberal towards them, they are, of course, in comfortable circumstances. But, alas ! no amount of money can compensate them for the loss of a husband and father, so affectionate and devoted, so true and faithful ! His absence they must deplore in sadness and sorrow, for many a year to come, unable to find reconciliation to his sudden and violent death, save in their sublime and cheering views of the character and government of God, and of the final destiny of the human race. But with these they rejoice in hope, and are able to comfort and encourage each other in the prospect of an ultimate reunion in celestial spheres.

## APPENDIX.

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**Dr. Wilmarth's Remarks, at Hope Chapel, New York,  
on Friday Evening, May 9th, 1851.**

I HAVE practiced medicine twenty years after the Allopathic method, and four years according to the method termed Hydropathic. My preceptor taught me to give large doses of medicine, especially in acute diseases. I gave a great amount of medicine in many cases. In dysentery, 30 to 60 grains of calomel, a large tablespoonful of castor oil, and 20 drops of laudanum, was thought a proper dose for an adult, once in 24 hours. I have known 20 grs. of calomel and 20 of jalap given to a scrofulous infant under 1 year of age! I have frequently given half that quantity in similar cases; I did it conscientiously, but I saw the fatal consequences, and abandoned that practice long ago.

The first I heard of the Water-Cure was from an editorial of Mrs. L. M. Child, in the Anti-Slavery Standard, some ten years ago, giving an account of Priessnitz's Establishment, his extraordinary success, &c. I must say, at that time I was really provoked at it, and did not believe it a fair statement; I thought *his* patients were not *very* sick; in short, I believed the whole thing was a humbug. I lived at that time in Leverett, Franklin Co., Mass. Soon

after that, I moved to Milford, Worcester Co., Mass., and joined The Hopedale Community of Non-Resistants, who were, by-the-by, for *reform* in medicine as well as morals. I passed very well as a Physician for two or three years. Now and then, I read something upon the subject of Water-Cure; for instance, Bulwer's Letter, Balbirnie's Philosophy of the Water-Cure, &c.; but I grew more and more provoked about it, though I could not help seeing a great remedial *principle* in the system. This was what provoked me; that I MUST UNLEARN MY ERRORS, and learn my practice again (of an illiterate peasant, too.) I felt just as I have, while reading essays on the deleterious effects of tobacco, before I had resolved to discontinue its use, (a practice, I may say here, which should never be *begun*.) I knew the Essayist told the *truth*; and so it was with the Water-Cure. I foresaw the flood that was to wash away the long list of poisonous drugs I thought so much of as medicinal agents. Well, I soon had a trial. One of my best friends had a fine little boy, an only child, who chanced to be taken severely sick, with dysentery. He called me, of course, as medical adviser. "What shall I do, Doctor?"—"Give a dose of calomel, oil and laudanum."—"Don't like to give calomel."—"Well, that is the best thing you *can* do." But I could not make him believe it. He sent for a Mr. Whitmarsh, of Boston, a Water-Cure Doctor of very limited practice at that time. He came, and, to my great surprise, arrested the complaint in a few days, with nothing but *water* and *abstinence*. This made me feel *cheap*. I foresaw that I must reform as well as my neighbors, or, if nothing worse befell me, my "occupation" would be "gone." About that time, I read "Johnson on

**Hydropathy," "Results of the Water-Cure," &c.** I began to be convinced. To set the matter at rest, and also happening to need medical aid myself, from some quarter or other, I went to Mr. David Cambell's excellent Establishment, at New Lebanon, N. Y. My good friend Dr. Bedortha was the resident physician. I did not tell them what my profession was, for three or four weeks. I desired, first, an unbiased examination and prognosis in my own case; and, second, to scrutinize the operation of the water processes, unwatched, myself. Accordingly, I conversed with patients about their respective ailments, took a list of some 20 cases, their symptoms, treatment, and the effects thereof. I looked sharp for humbuggery, but could not find it. All was open, candid, philosophical, and, in a good degree, successful. After I became willing to be at peace with the Water-Cure, I learned fast, or rather unlearned some of my errors, and made confession of my former barbarous practice. Receiving and seeing so much benefit from the Water-Cure, in the short space of eight weeks, I became about five-eighths converted to it. How could I help it if I meant to be honest? Professional pride, and a deference to high medical authority had blinded me, as they now do many others. But Hydropathy has continued to wash away these refuges, until now, at this present time, I may be set down about seven-eighths Hydriatic. I have abandoned the use of all corrosive and irritating poisons for medicine: I have no use for calomel in dysentery, and would not consent to have it given in any case. So of tartar emetic, &c., &c.

I believe mild medicines may do good, under some circumstances. I use some of the milder tonics in cases of great debility and want of blood. I

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believe there may be cases where the *laxity* of the nervous and muscular system is so great, the vital power so deficient, that the stomach is not capable of contractility sufficient to secrete gastric juice, excite appetite, &c., so as to replenish the system with its own natural stimulus, viz., nutriment. I believe the needed contractility, in some cases of congestion, (not in inflammation,) may be induced by mild stimulants, tonics, and astringents, thereby preventing the decomposition of the fluids and solids, and ultimate dissolution. But in all ordinary cases where I have conveniences for Hydriatric treatment, and the confidence of the patient, I have no use for medicine. I take none myself, though I am often ill, and once took medicine freely. I have learned a "more excellent way."

One great error in Allopathy is, making the stomach and bowels the critical organs, by violence. This is certainly very unphilosophical, to force a crisis upon one organ and compel it to carry off *all* the effete matter of the system, when nature designed it to carry only about one-eighth. This practice induces chronic inflammation of the mucous membranes of the bowels, &c. I once knew an almost incurable case of chronic diarrhœa, emaciation, debility, &c., induced by a single dose of "Sherman's Worm Lozenges," so highly lauded on placards, &c. The diarrhœa lasted about one year, and was cured with great difficulty, under a mixed treatment of Hydropathy and astringent medicine. These lozenges are chiefly composed of calomel and loaf sugar; a precious panacea, to scatter broadcast over the land for children to eat as they would sweetmeats! The latter are bad enough, but the former are abominable. The patient alluded to was a respectable young

lady, who not only lost a year's time, but nearly her life. Great caution should be exercised in the use of medicine, if used at all.

So also with water. Many use too heavy treatment, too many baths, and at too low a temperature. This is a great error. Patients reason falsely about treatment, like the man who took physic: "If two baths per day will do good, four will do twice as much good." Physicians should never yield to the importunities of patients in this matter, but nicely weigh and measure the amount of vitality in each case. If reaction takes place readily, the baths may be increased in number, and the temperature lowered with safety; but if reaction is slow and feeble, the baths must be slow and few. To give frequent and cold baths in such cases, would either lash the nervous system into fury and the mind into insanity, or overwhelm it with depression, and cause nearly or quite, fatal congestion in some one or more of the vital organs. I have seen all these effects from too cold, too frequent, and too heavy baths in the fore part of a course of treatment, before the system was prepared for it, by a gentle, tepid, coercing process. It takes a long time to recover one of these knock-down cases, to the use of water again. Therefore we should be careful, especially in the commencement of a Hydriatic course. If the patient is too hot, *cool* him; if too cold, *warm* him.

This is plain common sense.

But it is not common sense to let a patient lie shivering in the wet sheet for hours; if he does not get warm within *one* hour, he is not in a condition for wet packing. Neither should a patient with feeble powers be driven about in the cold air, or kept in a cold room, with hands and feet cold and blue as

a lean pigeon. No patient can improve under such circumstances. They may stay longer at an establishment, if their faith fail not ; but it is no credit to it, nor to the physician who prescribes or allows such treatment.

Our reliance for success consists in the proper direction and management of the vital forces, and the medical power of Nature ; we must not waste this power, for we cannot create it—we can only aid and direct it. Too cold treatment exhausts by depression or excessive reaction. Too much water conducts too much electricity from the system. Disease is radically removed by a change of matter : the old morbid particles are cast out, and new particles supplied. This change corresponds to the vital power of the system. If vitality abounds, the change will be rapid, as in acute diseases ; if feeble, it will be slow, as in chronic cases. The Water-Cure greatly facilitates and increases this change, by increasing the demand for food, enhancing the vital forces, setting in motion all the secretions and excretions, especially that great excreting organ, the skin, designed by nature to expel about five-eighths of all the worn-out and effete matter of the body. When the Water-Cure can be fully and properly applied, it places the organism in the best possible condition to operate and restore itself to health again. This is all we can do ; we cannot directly create vital power by any mode of treatment. The great natural agents, food, air, water, exercise, rest, &c., must do that. Our mission is a limited one, but highly responsible ; for although we cannot create health, we may, by injudicious treatment, destroy it.

The cause of Hydropathy is progressing fast in Massachusetts. The *Water Cure Journal* circulates

widely in that State ; much more widely than it did three years ago. There has been a great change in several towns within the circle of my practice in the last two years. Many families that formerly were frightened half out of their senses at every symptom of disease, and ran for a doctor with all speed, have learned that rest, pure air, bathing and abstinence, in all ordinary cases, are far better remedies than poisonous drugging.

But we are in our infancy yet, in the healing art. I am still open to conviction, and willing to learn. Truth, practical truth, should be our object, independent of all preconceived theories and speculations.

[The foregoing Address was delivered on the occasion of Dr. Wilmarth's election to the Presidency of the Hypropathic Association, and was wholly *impromptu*. It was reported, at the time, in the *Water Cure Journal*.]

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Some quack gets a few scattered rays of light brought to a focus on the science of medicine, and he beholds such wonders, that off he starts with two or three medical ideas rattling from side to side in his cranium, like the pebbles in a child's rattle-box ; and with the utmost assurance he says : " Here is my remedy ; take it ; it will search out evil, go into all the vessels and *glans*, and if there is any obstruction, remove it ; if not, it will do no harm ; it is friendly to nature and always acts in harmony with it." So down it goes, the remonstrances of far better judges notwithstanding.—DR. W.

## MEDICAL DELUSIONS.

Extracts from a Lecture.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :—

I purpose to occupy your attention this evening, with a brief glance at some of the popular delusions that have prevailed in reference to disease and medicine. The sentiment of old Hudibras, that

“No doubt the pleasure is as great,  
In being cheated as to cheat,”

has been, and still is, verified in the various forms of medical humbuggery that have disgraced the history of medicine from the days of Hippocrates to the present time. There must be some sort of “pleasure,” or satisfaction, in being “cheated,” or the public would not so often repeat the experiment.

Without entering into the philosophy of this subject, which may doubtlessly be traced to an unenlightened love of the marvelous, in the human mind, we will come directly to the facts in the history before us. It must have been quite natural to men, in all ages of the world, when sick and tortured with pain, to look about for something with which to relieve themselves ; and quite as natural to experiment with the various vegetable, animal, and mineral substances, which surround us. Knowing nothing of the healing powers within them, it was perfectly natural, too, if after using a certain agent, they found them

selves restored, to attribute the healing power to the medicine employed. And this we find to have been the fact all along down in medical history. Men were sick, they took such and such medicines, they recovered ; *therefore* those medicines cured them.

This ignorant and superficial mode of reasoning, has filled the world with thousands on thousands of *infallible* remedies, "for all the ills that flesh is heir to," and through their administration, "millions have died of medicable wounds." On the other hand, millions more have been restored to health by the recuperative energies of the system alone, while they were applying or swallowing some perfectly inert substance, which their faith had invested with great medicinal powers. In the early history of surgical practice, we find this propensity to ascribe the remedy to the wrong cause, to something marvelous, though it be only some magic mutterings. .

“Tom Pots was but a serving man,  
And yet a Doctor good ;  
He bound his handkerchief o'er the wound,  
And with *kind* words he *staunch'd* the blood.”

It was the “*kind*,” or marvelous words, that stopped the bleeding, in their estimation, and not the compression of the handkerchief over the wound.

We see this propensity in our day, not only to attribute effects to wrong causes, but to fall down in wonder and amazement before something perfectly unintelligible and absurd, if it be sufficiently clothed with mystery. Hence a wise look, or a barbarous and unmeaning language, (if it be Latin, or French, or Indian, it is all the better, if so be you can understand only now and then a word,) is an almost certain passport to confidence and medical fame among a large per cent. of the masses.

In the primitive ages the cheat was bolder, and the delusion more general, involving the medicine-men themselves, as well as their patients; and the most we can say is, they were. "deceiving and being deceived." But, for the most part, all parties were honest—an attribute which it requires a great stretch of charity, to accord to many of the medicine-peddlers of the present day.

In those days of ancient simplicity and ignorance, when an individual was so unfortunate as to cut or lacerate his flesh with some edged or serrated instrument, the wound was directed to be "dressed with dry lint and tightly bandaged, not to be looked at or disturbed for nine days, at the end of which time it was usually found healed, or in a fair way to be so. But the *instrument*, knife, sword, or whatever inflicted the wound, required the most faithful and constant attention. Day after day, the surgeon Dr. would repair, with his box of weapon-ointment, composed of human blood, a piece of powdered mummy, and some moss from the skull of a thief, hung in chains, olive oil," &c., and most ceremoniously dress the naughty instrument, till the expiration of nine days, when, if, on inspection, the wound was found doing well, the patient very cheerfully paid the surgeon's fees, besides feeling an everlasting sense of gratitude for his faithful attendance. And the surgeon, highly gratified with his success, pocketed the cash, and dismissed his patient, with "a conscience void of offense toward God and man!" Dame Nature and her Author were not recognized as having any agency in the healing process.

The same delusion was prevalent in relation to internal disease and its remedies. Happy would it be for humanity had this delusion passed away; but

alas ! it has not. Men and women fall sick, take certain medicines, according to their faith, get well, and, of course, it was the *medicine* that cured them ; they never dreaming that nature, with her silent operations, is continually repairing the wastes of the system, and removing the causes of disease. It matters but little what system of medication the patient adopts, (excepting a too actively poisonous one,) he will ordinarily recover, if he has faith sufficient to keep quiet long enough for Nature to perform the cure.

In days of yore, the people believed their *kings* possessed the power to heal by the touch of their royal fingers. This practice was followed by all the kings of England, from Edward the Conqueror to Queen Anne, with the exception of William the Third, who would not "touch" to do any such foolish thing. Charles the Second touched nearly 100,000 persons in the course of twelve years. Traces of these delusions have come down to our own day. I have seen the nail, or other cutting instrument, greased and hung in the corner, where it would be comfortably warm, because John or Betsey had cut or lacerated a foot with it. There you have a simple trace of the weapon-ointment practice.

Amulets, worn about the neck and over diseased parts, were also once in great repute for the removal of disease. They were composed of various substances, from a simple fish-bone, or piece of metal, to compound and medicated collections.

The delusions that have prevailed in regard to the healing power of *internal* remedies, are multitudinous. Bishop Berkeley, to whom Mr. Pope accorded "every virtue under heaven," made the surprising discovery that "Tar Water" was the grand rem-



edy for all disease. So certain was he of its efficacy, that he wrote and published an Essay on the subject, entitled, "Siris, a chain of philosophical Reflections and Inquiries concerning the virtues of Tar Water."

Bacon, the "wisest and brightest \*\* of mankind," was weak enough to believe in charms and amulets, and the weapon-ointment practice. Luther, who revolutionized the religious world, had great faith in dried toads as an antidote to malignant ulcers. "Experience," says he, "has proved the *toad* to be endowed with valuable qualities. If you run a stick through three toads, and, after having dried them in the sun, apply them to any pestilent tumor, they draw out all the poison and the malady will disappear." The toad practice, however, has long since gone into disrepute, and a powerful team from the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, has been attached to the diseased toad, and the medical drivers are whipping and-spurring most furiously. Doubtless they will soon draw out the monster and dispatch him.

One of the most extensive and successful medical delusions was invented by one of our own countrymen—Dr. Perkins of Connecticut, in 1796. The remedy consisted of two pieces of metal, called "tractors," one of which appeared to be steel, and the other brass, about three inches long, and tapering to a point. Their efficacy was supposed by the inventor and many learned men, to depend upon the development of a galvanic fluid. This system of practice spread rapidly through the N. E. States, and thence to England and some other European countries, and within eight years was so triumphant, that a Perkinsean Institution was formed in London, with a large proportion of its members from the

learned, the titled, and the reverend. The "tractors," which readily sold for about \$25 a pair, were; under the auspices of the society, applied most benevolently to the sick and suffering poor. (The original cost was one shilling a pair.) The society had its public dinners in honor of the grand discovery, and poetry even was laid under extensive contribution to sound its praises and diffuse its benefits. Thus runs the strain of one of the Perkinsean poets:

"See pointed metals, blest with power to appease  
The ruthless rage of merciless disease,  
O'er the frail part a subtle fluid pour,  
Drenched with invisible galvanic shower,  
Till the athritic staff and crutch forego,  
And leap exulting like the bounding roe."

As early as 1802, the Perkinsean Committee report 5000 cures, many of which were of the most decisive character. Volumes of certificates were published in succession, and Perkinsism was claimed to be the grand medical discovery of the age. There were unbelievers, however, in the days of Perkins, as well as in those of Bishop Berkeley, and some were wicked enough to try experiments on their patients, with "tractors" made of wood, and painted so as to resemble the five-guinea tractors. They very impudently pretended to produce the same effects, and no less than five of the patients of these mischievous Doctors returned public thanks in church for their cures. One of these patients, cured by the wooden tractors, (Miss Anne Hill,) exclaimed,—  
"Bless me! Why, who would have thought it, that them little things could pull the pain from one? Well, to be sure, the longer one lives, the more one sees; ah, dear!"

In 1809, a medical delusion sprung up in Brook-

lyn, N. Y., and obtained many converts. A physician, from some motive or other,—probably for money, though I will not sit in judgment—established himself in that city and commenced operations upon the gullibility of the inhabitants. He assumed a very knowing look and appearance, could see straight through his patients, as though they were transparent, (as most of them probably were,) could describe their maladies, “better than they could themselves,” (no doubt of that,) and prescribe the proper remedy without feeling the pulse, or asking questions; the patient merely walking before him as he sat in his pulpit-like elevation. In a few months, his fame spread abroad in all the region round about, and multitudes went and were carried to him to be healed of their infirmities. There was scarcely a limit to the success of his practice. His plan of treatment was very simple. His patients were furnished with packages of medicine which consisted of dried leaves, flowers, grass, &c., or whatever kind of vegetable substances he could gather in his rambles about the fields, that he knew to possess no active principle. These were to be steeped in rain water, and taken according to written directions. They were to use rain water for cooking their food, and for drink, and were restricted to a plain, simple diet, mostly vegetable. By this means thousands were healed of their infirmities. But when the “Rain Water Doctor,” as he was called, (what his real name was I have never learned,) had published a pamphlet unfolding the delusion, his patrons turned away in great dudgeon. Something analogous to this was the practice of Dr. Isaac Jennings of Derby, Ct., (now Oberlin, O.) so far as medicines were concerned. This physician, after practicing and

observing the effects of medicine some ten years, with the usual success, became dissatisfied and skeptical as to the utility of drugs, and adopted a mere placebo practice. His pills consisted of crumbs of bread, variously colored and scented, and his drops were of clear and colored water ; but no medicinal substance else whatever. Thus armed and equipped, (not exactly according to medical law, especially Allopathic,) he went forth into the field of disease, and superintended the efforts of Nature, with unbounded success, for twenty years, before he revealed his practice ! His friends, unlike Dr. Rainwater's, said, " Well, if you did cure us without medicine, it is all the better ; we got *well*, and that was what we wanted, and we will risk ourselves under your care before that of any body else." There are many cases and anecdotes in Dr. Jennings' Book on " Medical Reform " of a very interesting and instructive character. He is esteemed as a man of learning and great moral worth.

Medical history abounds with similar cases to those named ; nor are the various medical delusions of former and present times confined to a few obscure and ignorant individuals, for they often spread over large communities, and infect otherwise intelligent minds. Kings, queens and councils have often patronized the sheerest humbugs in medicine.

We come now to the great practical question involved in these records of delusion. The facts of the delusions are not doubted, nor can we doubt the fact that great and wonderful cures have been performed under them. What was it that caused these cures ? This is the great question. I will tell you. It was the mighty power, established by the Creator in every living, sentient, organized being. I say

**mighty**, and it is so because it is capable of resisting, by its vital properties, the combined action of all the chemical elements of nature with which it is surrounded. It is called the recuperative power of the system, and when we want to speak learnedly, the *Vis Medicatrix Naturæ*, or medical power of nature. Nature's only tendencies are to life.

The *vital power* alone, under God, is our physical savior, as much as the Holy Ghost is our moral and spiritual purifier. And where this power is in the ascendent, disease is always curable, and *vice versa*. The kingdom of health is within us, and not in a Doctor's saddle bags, or trunk. Where, by a long or short course of violation of the organic laws of our system, we have so much exhausted the vital forces, that a collapse of nervous energy takes place, it is "the sin unto death," physically, and, in the language of the apostle, "I do not say that ye shall pray for it." That is, it is a doomed case, and it is of no use to make effort in its behalf.

But is there no balm in Gilead? Is there not a physician there? Not for all cases. All short of the cases indicating fatal inroads upon vitality, just hinted at, are hopeful.

What, then, are the agents, by which we may aid and sustain the vital forces, while nature performs the wondrous work of curing our maladies? Answer: Air, warmth, food, water, exercise, electricity; these, the common, the every-day elements of life, are what preserve us while in health, and the just graduation of them to our age, temperament, susceptibility and vital power, when laboring under disease, are the only reliable remedies; and that man is most worthy the name of physician, who best understands their agencies, and has wisdom enough

to adapt them to the wants of suffering humanity.

But I would say, in conclusion, it is the mission of Science and of Christianity, to clear the mental and moral horizon of humanity, from all the clouds and darkness that at present hide the serene and beautiful sky of the future ; and the stewards of God's medical and spiritual heritage have an important part to act in this drama of physical and spiritual life. It is theirs to guide the frail bark of the invalid over the tempestuous sea of life to a haven of physical and moral rest, by teaching and enforcing obedience to all the laws of our being ; and not to make a craft of a noble profession, and amass wealth at the expense of ignorance and superstition, leaving the world involved in the darkness of the past. O, no ! the philanthropic and true physician will labor for the good of his patients ; he will teach them how to *live* ; to have a rational faith, founded on God and Nature, not on charms and amulets, or any hocus-pocus whatsoever.

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### PHYSICIANS.

Notwithstanding their much bad practice, it would be great injustice to set down the generality of physicians as a class of impostors and conspirators against the public health. As a profession, they are as high minded, as truth-loving and benevolent, as any other ; and they are before all other professions in the sacrifices which they make for the relief of suffering humanity ; constantly exposing themselves, both by day and by night, to disease and death. These labors and sacrifices give them a strong claim upon public gratitude. But their great sin is *bigotry* :

" Did Marcus say 'tis fact ? then fact it is ;  
No truth so valid as a word of his,"

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## EXTRACTS FROM A LECTURE

## On the Scarlet Fever.

THIS disease derives its name from the scarlet-colored eruption that usually appears on the surface of the body. It is vulgarly called "Canker Rash." It occurs at all seasons of the year, but generally in the fall or beginning of winter. It often seizes whole families; but children and young persons are the most subject to it. It rarely occurs more than once during life; and it arises from a specific contagious miasma. Certain peculiarities of the atmosphere, thus far unrevealed, appear to exert considerable influence over the intensity of the contagion; as is manifest from the occasional prevalence of the disease in epidemics, and the different grades of severity and varieties of character these have assumed. Great irregularity, at times, marks the progress of the epidemic. After raging extensively with much violence, it may suddenly abate, so as almost to disappear, and then resume its power, and prevail with more malignity than ever.

This contagion seems occasionally to linger for several years in a certain district, affecting from time to time only a few individuals. It is manifestly somewhat contagious, but not so much so as the small pox and the measles. The activity of the contagious principle may be influenced by various circumstances; such as constitutional idiosyncrasies, age, sex,

climate, accidental predisposition, and peculiar atmospheric temperament. Certain individuals are entirely unsusceptible to the contagion, never becoming affected with the disease, though fully exposed to its cause.

[Here follow minute descriptions of the various forms of the disease and its numerous symptoms, which are necessarily omitted.]

I have seen a great many cases of scarlet fever, it having prevailed extensively in the section of country, where I formerly practiced medicine—three times as an epidemic, in the space of three years ; besides more or less scattering cases at other times. I am prepared, therefore, to give an opinion respecting its nature and the best mode of treatment. We have seen that it is contagious, and, like other miasms, is inhaled with the atmosphere directly into the lungs. Like other contagions, it makes its first impression upon the nervous system, as is evinced by the lassitude and uneasy feelings that precede the febrile attack. It produces a sedative or debilitating effect upon the nervous system, thereby diminishing the vital power. The poison is carried directly into the circulating fluid, being brought into contact with the blood in the lungs; through which organ the whole mass of blood passes every four or five minutes. This fluid being charged with the poisonous miasm, carries it to every organ and tissue in the body, irritating and inflaming the mucous membrane of the stomach or bowels, and all the abdominal viscera, and also the heart and lungs and lining membrane of the chest, the brain itself coming under the morbid influence, when it can no longer resist it. In this state of things, the vital forces of the system are

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rallied and put forth an effort proportioned to their power, to expel the enemy from the citadel of life. All the excitement, the quick pulse, the hurried breathing, the vomiting, the increased heat, &c., are but so many well-directed efforts of the system to get rid of an inward foe. By well-directed efforts I mean, the best nature can do under the circumstances.

Now, to what does all, or nearly all these efforts, tend? Why, simply to throw the morbid matter upon the whole surface of the body, or the skin—the external membrane of the body—and thereby save the internal vital organs (the heart and lungs,) and the mucous membranes of the stomach and bowels, the condition of which may be seen by the appearance of the tongue, fauces, palate and throat. The capillary (small, hair like,) blood-vessels have lost their tone, become relaxed and enlarged in size, so as to admit red blood where it was never intended to flow. The papilla of the skin are elevated, the cutaneous vessels are so relaxed and overloaded with blood in consequence of diminished and a nearly total want of exhalation, that an effusion of coagulated lymph sometimes takes place in the papulous elevations, which is not entirely absorbed by the time the rash subsides—giving the skin a rough and uneven appearance. Indeed, there seems to be a total obstruction of perspiration, a complete drying up of the ten thousand times ten thousand little fountains that exude their vapor from the body; and at the same time there is a powerful effort of nature to reopen these sluices of the system, and to wash away the noxious miasm that is racing through every avenue of life, and threatening destruction in every quarter. And what are the consequences of

this vital struggle? If the vital force holds out a sufficient length of time, if the pressure and irritation bears nearly equally in every part of the system, the stricture upon the skin gives way in due time, the scarf-skin is cast off, (destroyed, burnt up, as it were) perspiration is reëstablished, the enemy is driven out, and health and harmony restored. But if the vital power fails in this conflict, and the heart and arteries, worn down by excessive excitation, can no longer maintain an equilibrium and determination to the surface, the centripetal forces become dominant, and the morbid agent falls upon the internal organs, producing fatal congestion and inflammation of some one or more of these highly vital parts—the brain, the lungs, the liver and spleen, or the mucous membrane of the stomach and bowels: and the disease will always fall upon those parts which were most predisposed, or most unable to defend themselves, by reason of constitutional debility, or previous derangement.

Bear this fact always in mind, that death comes only by the viscera, in this as in every other disease; that is, it is not the fever that kills, for that is nothing more nor less than the rallying or rallied power of Nature to relieve herself from the invasion of disease—it is the vital power of preservation opposing the chemical power of decomposition. It is not the eruption upon the surface, and rarely, if ever, the affection of the throat that destroys the patient, but it is internal inflammation or congestion of some vital organ, which, unable to hold out longer in the struggle, faints, as it were, and becomes relaxed, and the poisoned blood flows excessively into it, and entirely overwhelms and puts a stop to its functions. It dies, and the general system soon follows.

Having said thus much respecting the nature, progress and termination of Scarlet Fever, we are now prepared to inquire into the most rational mode of treatment. It should be remembered, that by any mode of treatment, all that physicians, medicines, nurses, or sympathizing friends can do for the sick, is, to place the patient in the most favorable condition for the vital power of the system to exert its free and full force in resisting the disease. I do not mean by this, that we are to do *nothing*. There are many things we *can* do that contribute materially to aid nature in her struggle with disease, such as removing causes, and supplying fresh air, cool drinks, &c. But we should never "counteract the vital principle;" never expend the energies of the system by endeavoring to force a crisis, with violent remedies. If you wish to help a loaded team up a steep hill, it is very important which side of the wheel you place your shoulder to lift. Alas! for poor human nature; she has many a time had to carry her own load, physician, saddle-bags and all, up the hill of health. This is a sad commentary on the healing art; but it is true. Do not counteract the vital principle; remember that—even fever, however violent, should not be counteracted as an end, especially by reducing the vital forces. Remove the cause of the fever, or of whatever disease, and the effect will cease. Assist nature in removing it, in the way she dictates, and never counteract her operations; it is dangerous to do so.

What, then, is the true method of cure in Scarlet Fever? Manifestly, to assist the efforts of nature in expelling the noxious miasm from the system.—Through what evacuatories, or outlets, does nature endeavor to expel the noxious principle? Answer:

from the stomach, bowels, and kidneys, in some degree, but mostly by the skin ; here the main forces are directed. In a state of health, about five-eighths of all the evacuations from the body pass off insensibly in the form of vapor, and in disease, it is well known that when a gentle, natural perspiration is established, the patient soon becomes convalescent ; and this evacuation by the skin need not be carried to profuse sweating to effect the object—a gentle breathing moisture, a mere relaxing and softening of the skin, is sufficient. In scarlet fever, in particular, there seems to be a strenuous effort in the system to expel the cause of the disturbance through the pores of the skin, as is evidenced by the great heat upon the surface, in most cases, the effusion of lymph and serum (thin parts of the blood) under the scarf skin, the diminution of urine, &c.

What, then, are the best means to be employed to assist nature—that is, to place her under the most favorable circumstances to overcome and drive out the enemy ? Simply to reduce the heat of the system, by proper means, to the right temperature for perspiration to take place, and to maintain it in that temperature. Hence it is that all attempts to procure perspiration, by stimulating drinks, increasing the bedclothes, &c., when the temperature is already above the sweating point, must prove unavailing, and only increase the difficulty. On the other hand, a draught of cold water has many a time proved the best diaphoretic, (or sweating medium,) by suddenly reducing the heat of the body to the sweating point ; so also by sponging with cold water, perspiration has been immediately excited.

But is this all you are going to do in this formidable disease ? This is all many cases require ; yea,

many cases of scarlet, as well as other fevers, have been rendered unmanageable and fatal by doing more—by counteracting the living principle—by violent emetics and cathartics, and alterative doses of calomel, &c., frustrating the efforts of nature to remove the disease through the skin, and fixing the irritation upon the delicate lining of the intestines, and keeping it there till the colliquative diarrhoea or hemorrhage took place and destroyed the patient. But would you not give fever-powders and drops, to keep down the heat, open the pores, &c.? No. The whole farrago of fever medicines are not worth a hundredth part as much as good air and a draught of cold water, as often as the patient desires. If you must give drops, fill a vial with spring water, and give ten drops of it once in four hours, in as much good soft well water as the patient wishes.

The hydropathic treatment must be conducted on general principles; and in severe cases an accurate knowledge of both the healthy and diseased conditions of the human system is indispensable to success; though it is always far less dangerous than drug-treatment, on account of its simplicity and common-sense principles; for no common-sense person would think of applying cold water to the patient when he was already too cold, nor hot fomentations when he was too hot; nor compel him to drink large draughts of water when there was no thirst.

Many symptoms of this disease plainly show an effort, though an ineffectual one, to throw the morbid agent upon the surface, thereby relieving the internal organs from their overwhelming congestion and oppression. In such cases there is no known agent that can compare with the application of water, in

some form or other—the warm bath, the vapor bath, or what is better still, the warm wet sheet, together with large, warm, or even hot fomentations over the stomach, liver and bowels, when properly modified to meet the actual state of the patient. The wet sheet is the most soothing application that can be administered to the external sentient surface. The moisture of the sheet is soon converted into vapor, by the heat of the body ; so that the patient may be said to be in a steam bath of his own making. This warm vapor settling on the skin, makes it soft and moist, removes the stricture, invites a flow of blood to the surface, thereby timely relieving the internal organs from congestion and inflammation, bringing out the rash at an early period, and establishing an equilibrium in the whole circulation. Who cannot see that *this* is a common-sense application, without danger, without suffering ?

In cases of strong reaction, high fever, and uniform scarlet surface, we have a plain, strait-forward course. 1. Let the patient drink as much cold water as the thirst calls for, in moderate quantities, but often. 2. Keep the heat down to the sweating point, about 100 or 102 Fahr., by tepid, cool or cold ablutions, spongings, cold wet sheets, changed every hour, half hour, or quarter of an hour, according to the violence of the symptoms ; use cool or tepid injections frequently ; keep on wet bandages, as the case may require, if there be inflammation in any part ; observe the strictest cleanliness ; have a constant supply of cool, fresh air, and make the patient as comfortable as possible. These are the natural means to treat this formidable disease, as well as other febrile affections. But it requires judgment, skill and experience, to adapt these methods

judiciously to the different constitutions and grades of disease. Every case must be its own interpreter, and must be managed from hour to hour, according to the symptoms. Professor Elliotson, in following out the practice of Dr. Currie, describes a most excellent method of healing some grades of scarlet fever. He says : " The disease has certainly been cut short by taking the patient out of bed and pouring cold water upon him. The heat of the body is so great, in this disease, that no danger is to be apprehended from cold affusions. It is true, there are cases in which the patient is more or less chilly ; but if, in this affection, the *general* rules I lay down in the case of common fever be followed, there is no danger whatever, but the greatest advantage, in taking a patient out of bed, however hot he may be, and pouring cold water upon him. Those rules are, that the temperature of the body is steadily above 98 degs. (blood heat ;) that there are no profuse general sweats ; that there is no chilliness ; and no inflammation in the chest or abdomen. It is a great comfort to the individual ; and, as long as it is comfortable, it should be had recourse to."

Thus you see there is a perfect harmony in theory and practice, and the most happy results from this mode of treating the terrible malady under consideration. The warm applications remove congestions ; the cold subdue inflammations, remove the stricture of the skin, and induce perspiration, which is the natural mode of cure in this disease—and all this, without the hazard of fixing the irritation upon the mucous membrane of the stomach and bowels, (which is often done by drastic emetics and purgatives,) or without doing violence to the vital power of the system. Who, then, would not choose this

“ more excellent way ?” I cannot better express the gratitude and satisfaction I feel for the light I have received on this subject than by repeating the language of Southey :

“ Most blessed water ! Neither tongue can tell  
The blessedness thereof, nor heart can think,  
Save only them to whom it hath been given  
To taste of that divinest gift of heaven.  
I stopped and drank at that divinest well,  
Fresh from the rock of ages where it ran :  
It had a heavenly quality to quell  
All pain. I rose a renovated man,  
And would not now, when that relief was known,  
For worlds the needful suffering have foregone.”

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### ANOTHER EXTRACT.

THE great aim in the scientific treatment of disease should be to aid the system in its efforts to rid its vital parts of mischief, which mischief invariably consists in the retention of an undue amount of blood, and tardy circulation in the parts affected. But as the circulation of the blood is under the influence of the organic system of nerves, the power and efforts of the last are to be strengthened, in order to dissipate the inflammation, or congestion, referred to. Curative treatment is therefore made through the instrumentality of the nervous system. This being the case, we intuitively perceive the fallacy of that reasoning which led to the use of powerful depletory measures in every-day practice, particularly blood-letting, drastic purgatives, salivation, and so on. The nervous circulating systems need strengthening, instead of weakening ; invigorating, instead



of debilitating. Yet, depletion has been and is practiced to a most fearful extent. When I remember the vast amount of the vital fluid which myself and others have drawn from human veins, the enormous doses of calomel, antimony, and other poisons I have seen administered, and which I have administered, I am astounded—yea, I stand aghast at the recollection! Yet, were these the measures I once employed, and which others still employ, to assist the already debilitated organs in throwing off disease! The wonder is not that we see so many wretched beings dragging out a miserable existence on beds and crutches, from drug diseases; but that they were not killed outright—ah! many *are* so killed, and the result ascribed to the incurable nature of the disease! The celebrated Dr. Rush of Philadelphia, in a public lecture, long ago, made the following humiliating confession. Speaking of the instability of the theories and practice of physic, he said:—“Dissections daily convince us of our ignorance of disease, and cause us to blush at our prescriptions. What mischief have we done under the belief of false facts and false theories! We have assisted in multiplying diseases; we have done more—we have increased their mortality.”

But I need not quote others. During twenty years' practice with Allopathic medicines, I could not fail to see, too often, its disastrous effects upon human life, both in my own and others' practice. I have seen every tooth in the jaws of a middle aged man, fall out—not merely one at a time, but two and three together, taking with them the entire socket, as far down as the fangs extended; leaving the victim to drag out a few years of miserable existence, and then, from slight additional causes, to sicken,

and drop into a premature grave. I have seen the wife and mother slain in the most horrible manner by this corrosive poison—the entire mouth, tongue and throat, literally mortifying and sloughing away, piecemeal, destroying the organs of speech and emitting the well known fetor of a dead body, for long days and nights before death came to the relief of the wretched sufferer.

Such are sometimes the effects of only *one* of the multitude of poisonous agents that go to make up the sum total of the drug practice. Antimony, arsenic, and lead, claim a large share of destructive power. Neither must it be supposed that all the mischief is done by such drugs only as are known to be poisonous. Many of those which are generally thought to be of a very simple and innocent nature, are highly deleterious, in a great variety of ways.

Can any one blame us, then, for seeking to introduce a treatment of less fatal tendency? And have not a sufficient number of victims been already immolated upon the altars of quackery, prejudice and selfishness? Is it not high time for a *reform* in medical practice? There is a most singular and almost unaccountable blindness in the public mind, and among medical men also, in relation to facts in the cure of diseases. Innumerable instances are upon record of spontaneous cures without the intervention of any artificial appliances whatever, but solely by the medical power of the system. Why not have some faith in nature? Again, in other and severer cases, how many examples are on record, and some within the recollection of many of us, of the most remarkable cures that have taken place, in persons who, through instinct, in the delirium of fever, have broken over all medical restrictions, and drank

*water* to their satisfaction, or immersed themselves in the cooling element, and been healed ! Why not have a little faith in water, as a remedial agent ? Strange to relate—notwithstanding all the facts in the case—but few medical men among the whole host have availed themselves of these practical hints ; but still continue to torture nature with irritating and narcotic poisons, though she most piteously pleads and remonstrates against them. Many of us remember the period when fainting nature was sternly denied the only beverage she yearned after, and most pathetically pleaded for. Thank heaven, that cloud in the medical heaven is chased away. We hope soon to see a universally clear sky. When the great elements of heat and cold, water and air, diet and regimen, will constitute the chief medical agents to assist the vital energies in time of need.

The wet sheet packing is a safe and efficacious remedy in the commencement of nearly, if not all, acute diseases—and a very important process in most chronic cases, after suitable preliminaries. It may be compared in its calming effects to a poultice placed over the whole body. Instead, therefore, of irritations proceeding from those nerves spread over the skin, toward the brain, the brain is quieted, by their withdrawal, for the time being ; so much so, that the patient ordinarily sleeps while “ packed,” and will sleep then when he would not sleep without it. This process is always followed, or should be, by the tepid, or cold half-bath, plunge bath, or dripping sheet, according to the nature of the disease and circumstances, followed by friction with crash towels, and so on, till suitable reaction takes place. This process acts upon the largest and most neglected outlet of the system, viz., the skin, the organ ordained to

transmit, or carry out about five-eighths of all the worn-out materials of the body. Who does not see the superiority of this mode of operation in removing disease, over the ordinary one, of introducing still more irritating matters in the form of calomel, and other poisons, into the delicate membranous cavity of the stomach and bowels ?

[Here follows a description of various other baths and their effects, which must be omitted.]

Thus we have, in this great and indispensable gift of the Creator, pure water, an agent, which, by its varied applications, in connection with pure air, proper diet, graduated exercise and mental repose, is capable of producing emetic, cathartic, dretic, sudorific, and electric effects upon the human system, thereby removing those morbid conditions which we term inflammation and congestion, always present in all forms of acute or chronic disease. All these results are secured, under judicious management, without any hazard of irritating the delicate textures of the internal organs. True, it requires much labor, patience and perseverance to radically cure a deep-seated chronic disease. But who ever heard of such a disease being radically cured by drug medication ?

The Water-Cure system, though not infallible, places the patient in the most favorable condition for the vital power of the system to rally its forces to battle against the enemy, and when that power is sufficiently strong to throw the morbid action from a more to a less important organ, the disease is curable.

In conclusion, I remark : there is no chance-work on the one hand, nor mysterious visitations of Providence on the other, relative to health, or disease ; we

are governed by wise and immutable laws. If we obey those laws, we receive their blessings ; if we violate them, we must suffer their penalty ; and none the less for our ignorance of them. Hence it is said, " we perish for lack of knowledge." Let us, then, study and obey the laws of our being—and learn to *prevent* disease, which is far better than to know how to cure it. Then, when old age shall steal upon us, as soon it must, and our work shall be done, we will

" Calmly retire, like evening light,  
And, cheerful, bid the world, good night."

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[ERRATA.—A few typographical errors have escaped detection, which the critical reader will not fail to observe.]

THE END.











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